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BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE

Volume 1, Issue 8
February 10, 1986

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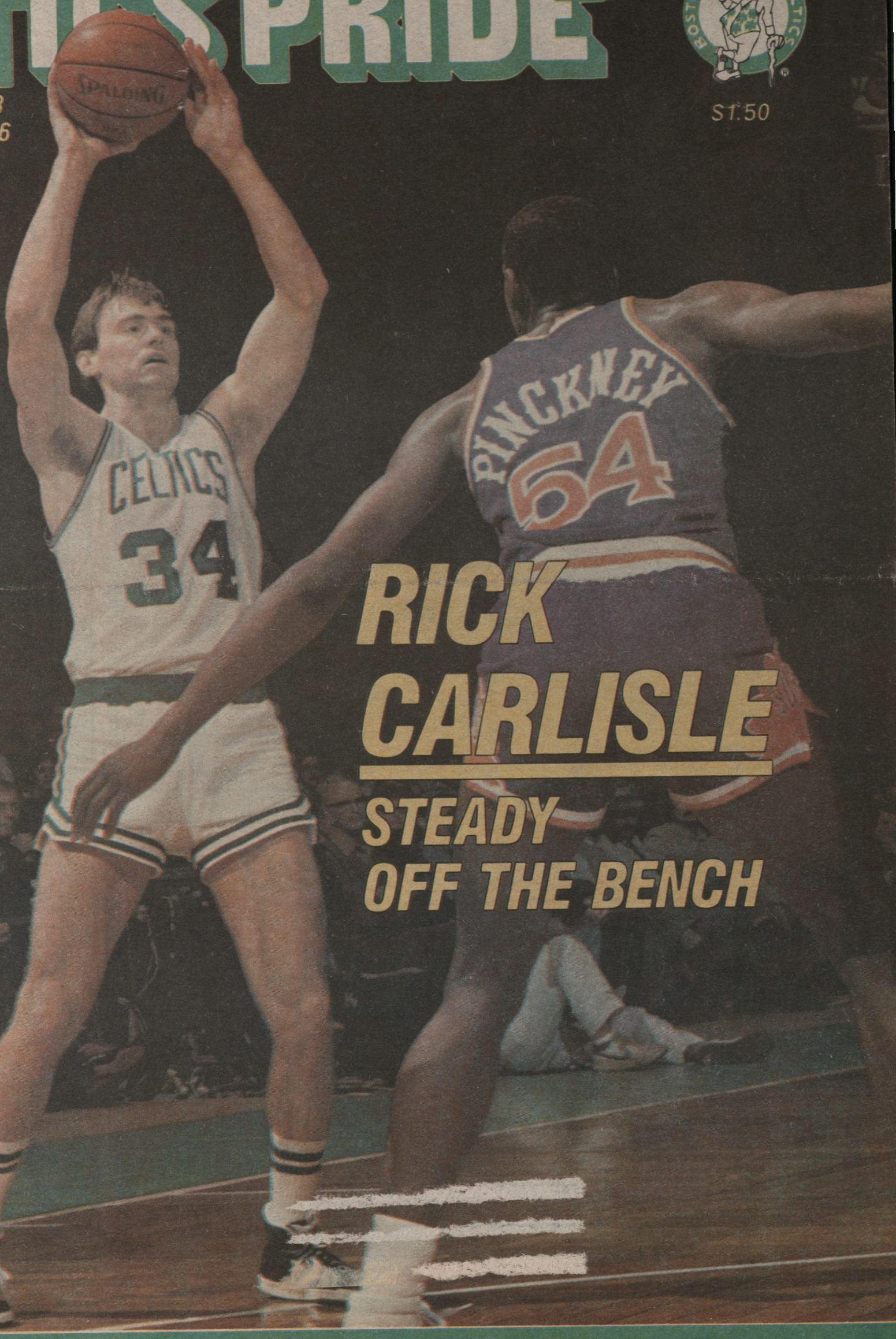

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★ ★ ★ CELTICS VIDEO YEARBOOK ★ ★ ★

Jan Volk and Red Auerbach present K.C. with a very special basketball.

K.C. Jones Gets 300th Victory

At halftime of the Celtics game against Denver on Wednesday, January 15th, Celtics' General Manager Jan Volk and President Red Auerbach made a special presentation to Head Coach K.C. Jones. Honoring K.C. for his 300th career regular-season coaching win, gained at home against Chicago on Sunday, December 15th, they presented him with a specially inscribed basketball.

K.C. coached his way to 155 of those wins in his three seasons as coach of the Capital/Washington Bullets (1973-1976). He has quickly garnered the remaining 145 wins in his two-plus seasons as the head mentor of the Celtics. Addditionally, he had 42 career playoff wins and 2 more as head coach of the Eastern Conference in All-Star competition.

BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE

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Executive Editor: Tod Rosensweig
Managing Editor: Porter C. McKinnon
Associate Editor: Robert Schron
Associate Editor: Tony Cooper
Associate Editor: Jeffrey Twiss
Advertising Director: Mark Lev 617-523-6050

PUBLISHER: Porter C. McKinnon, Weston Communications, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, CT 06840, 203 - 966-6092

Production Director: Fred Woodcock
Graphic Coordinator: Denise Woodcock
Artist: David Olsen
Subscription Problems: Joan Waag: 203-966-6092
Contributing Photographers: Dick Raphael, Nat Butler, Steve Lipofsky

Contributing Writers: Terry Lyons, Red Auerbach, K.C. Jones, Glenn Ordway, M.L. Carr, Eddie Gillooly, Larry Donald, Wilma Mahoney, Dave Zuccaro, Rick Weisman

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8
FEBRUARY 10, 1986

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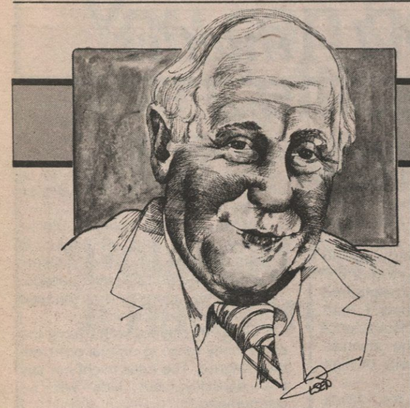


Ask Red Auerbach

EDITORS NOTE: "Ask Red Auerbach" is a regular feature of Celtics Pride. If you have a question for Red, please send it to Celtics Pride, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840. Red will answer as many as possible in each issue.

QUESTION: Who do you think are the top seven college players entering the draft this year? What do you think of Charles Smith of Pittsburgh?
Doug Steve, Indiana, Pa.

RED'S ANSWER: Charles Smith will not be one of the first seven picks in the country. In fact, I don't even think he'll be a first-rounder. But, I've seen him one time and you can't judge a player on the basis of one look; from what I have seen of him, though, he's probably a second or third round pick. As far as rating the other top players goes, you see a lot depends on which of the underclassmen will be coming out. Of the actual true seniors, you've got Brad Daugherty of North Carolina, Tarpley of Michigan, Salley and Price from Georgia Tech, Kenny Walker from Kentucky, Len Bias from Maryland and Rafael Addision of Syracuse. These may not be the absolute top seven, but they are among the best.

QUESTION: What are your views on the possibility of the NBA expanding to other cities?
Tom Hughes, Mounds View, Minn.

RED'S ANSWER: I'm against expansion at this time. I think the league is as close to parity right now as it's ever been. If we go and expand and dilute the product with a couple of teams that will struggle on the court and ultimately draw poorly, we'll be making a big mistake. So I would say that we should totally disregard expansion right now; almost every team is both competitive on the court and on a financial basis, and I don't think this is the time for changes. If it's not broken, don't fix it.

QUESTION: Would you please contrast the style of play in the Eastern and Western Conferences?
Gregory Barna, Marietta, Ga.

RED'S ANSWER: At the present time, there's no difference. There's no difference; a team is a team. Whichever NBA city a team is located in, they get their players from all over the country. There's no particular style of play related to geography. Style of play is dependent entirely on the team's coach. Years ago, the college styles of the East and West were different, but that was rapidly erased. Today, basketball is basketball.

QUESTION: Are you still opposed to the 2-3-2 format of play in the championship finals?
Gregory Barna, Marietta, Ga.

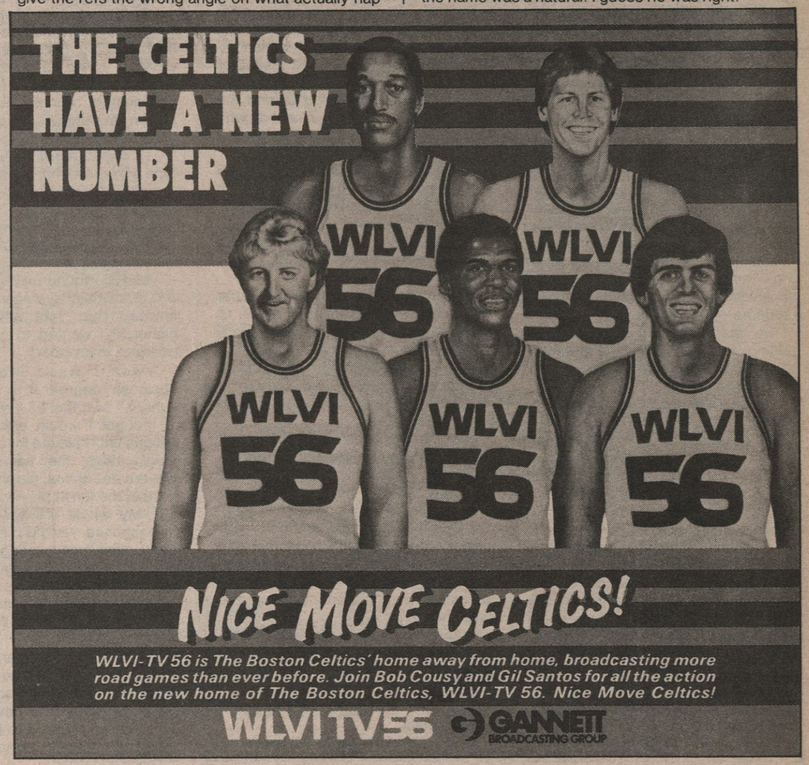
RED'S ANSWER: Well, there's no real point in voicing my opposition to 2-3-2, because they're going to have it again, but I don't think it's the right thing to do. That doesn't mean, though, that I think it would be a good thing for us to finish with a worse regular-season record than the Lakers. That's ridiculous. If you're a coach, a president, a general manager, or a player, you want to win every single game that you play.

QUESTION: Do you think the quality of the officiating in the league would improve if they used three officials or replays?
Wil Jordan, Yuba City, Calif.

RED'S ANSWER: I don't think three officials are indicated at this time, and the use of replays is totally impossible because of interrupting the continuation of the game. Also, the position of the camera might give the refs the wrong angle on what actually happened in a specific situation. So, I think the league is better off leaving things as they are. By the way, I think the quality of officiating is not that bad at all; a lot of teams have been winning on the road, indicating that the officials seem to have more guts than in the past. Their salaries are guaranteed, they've got their own pension fund and everything like that, so they're not intimidated now as much as they used to be.

QUESTION: How did the Boston Celtics first originate? And why did they name the NBA Boston team the "Celtics"?
Michelle Bucher

RED'S ANSWER: The original Celtics were not located in Boston at all, but were a barnstorming basketball team in the 1920's and 1930's, before a basketball league had been formed. When the NBA (then called the Basketball Association of America) was formed, Walter Brown became one of the original owners of a franchise. The story goes that in a conversation between Walter and Howie McHugh, the team's longtime publicity director, Walter came up with the idea of calling the team the "Celtics". He figured that with the name's basketball tradition and Boston's strong Irish population, the name was a natural. I guess he was right.



Celtics Views: Education and Athletics

After two years of negotiation and tribulation, the NCAA passes at its convention in New Orleans, Proposition 48. This states that for an athlete to be eligible to participate in varsity sports during his or her freshman year at a Division I institution he or she must achieve a grade-point average of 2.0 in high school in a core curriculum that includes at least three years in English, two years in math, two years in social science and two years in natural or physical science.

This proposal also requires that the student-athlete achieve at least a combined score of 700 out of a possible, 1600 in the Scholastic Aptitude Test or a 15 out of a possible 36 in the American College Testing examination, the two standard national entrance examinations.

The rule doesn't bar the athlete from entering a college, it only makes the athlete ineligible for intercollegiate athletics during the freshman year.

The New York Times, Jan. 12, 1986.

Several of the Celtics were asked their opinions of college life and academics, some of the effects of Proposition 48 from a successful athlete's perspective, and also to relate some of their own methods of dealing with the pressures of college life and change.

The Boston Celtics' players and coaches expressed serious ideas about efforts of structuring more rigid standards in the collegiate ranks. They generally felt the thought had merit---assist youngsters in achieving academic goals. But they understood the truth, too: higher levels of achievement effectively eliminate students---often black---who had little or no preparation for college level testing. And there were the problems of adjusting once the student reached college.

Dennis Johnson recalled a "very serious" problem when he re-entered junior college after being away from school for a year after graduating high school. "With the help of my family and counselors at school, I made it through. After that year, my life began coming together."

Johnson spent a year at Los Angeles Harbor Junior College before entering Pepperdine University in Malibu. Recognizing that the adjustment to a new type of life would be stressful, he carefully scheduled classes around his busiest season. Several were planned on Monday-Wednesday-Friday, most in the mornings, because basketball practice was in the afternoon.

"I was also helped because my school was fairly small; there were never more than 50 in any class."

Larry Bird: Set goals in college.

Johnson is a frequent speaker in the black community in Boston and he is trying to incorporate business into humanitarian causes there. He feels certain that the slow pace he experienced in his early collegiate years helped him adjust to his oft-times hectic NBA career now.

Jerry Sichting attended Purdue University, found an interesting major in Political Science and World War II history, and recalls a balanced univeristy life. He sees conflicts surrounding the new NCAA rules.

"I see the reasoning behind the regulations, but it's tough on kids who are potential NBA players but haven't had secondary school preparation.

"When kids get into college and are helped through the pitfalls of a new environment (with counseling), they might change. If they're restricted severely at the start, they may be failures without ever knowing their potential.

"But the other side of it is that there are illegal payments made to players and the system is suffering. Maybe the scholarships should be legally more lucrative: if the schools are making money and they're a business, some of the players should be compensated."

A much-publicized tale is Larry Bird's journey through Indiana University and West Baden Junior College before the all-time great finally found himself at Indiana State.

Bird thinks the high school years need to be fortified to "give the kids some incentive to study in high school. Maybe a little academic pressure is important to increase kids' incentive."

According to Bird, he wasn't concerned nearly as much with setting goals in high school as he was in college. Once he was settled at Indiana State, academics and athletics fell into place.

"In college, I found that setting a goal in academics and setting goals in athletics went hand-in-hand."

* * * * *

The coaches of the Celtics, Head Coach K.C. Jones and Assistant Coach Chris Ford quickly saw the difficulties of entering school in the beginning, and then, maintaining eligibility.

"I am not fond of any legalized restrictions for entering school or obtaining scholarships," commented Jones, who added he hadn't read much about the NCAA discussions. "The problem is with the standardized testing and the quality of high school education.

"The background for black youngsters is insufficient to prepare them for standardized tests. Taking these tests, the black youth is culturally deprived."

Ford scheduled two courses in two summers at Villanova University--passing up tempting basketball tours of Europe. "School was very tough---that is, trying to play and maintain a normal course load. By spreading my courses over a summer term, academics and sports were manageable."

Ford majored in business and jurisprudence.

Kevin McHale took a Communications major at the University of Minnesota, a major he now thinks easy, in trying to balance athletics and academics. McHale is opinionated about the favortism shown to athletes, recognizing he has benefitted from the system.

"I think there should be some type of regulations, because I believe the general population needs to have access to the same luxuries the athletes do. For example, athletes receive extensive tutoring; why shouldn't the general population?

McHale found maintaining a 2.5-3.0 grade point average fairly easy to maintain, but "not anything much higher, if I wanted to give my best energies to my sport.

"And I would like to get a business degree if I go back to school," said the 27-year old player. "I thought I would enjoy communications until I played for a career. The media does the same thing the players do---travel, hotels, the road---without the fun of playing basketball.

"My whole life has been post-adolescence. No, I'd prefer business over sports broadcasting."

McHale possibly would resume school: he remains several credits short of his degree, partially due to his participation in the World Games in 1979.

Robert Parish remarked that he, like Johnson, benefited from attending a small school, because "I had people around who helped me adjust." Parish referred to the assistance of the athletic department, and especially "my coach. He stressed education first." In another context Parish has criticized Coach Larry Little's insufficient understanding of the pivot game. "But he helped me in other, important things," Parish declared.

Parish, also like Johnson, thinks that students who struggle in academics and who are athletes should be steered to a junior college. Yet he firmly opposes any imposed limits to player participation.

"A lot of players won't have the opportunity to go to school or to get their degree. The rules might not say this explicitly, but kids will be discouraged."

"Let's face it," concluded Rick Carlisle, a thoughful major in Psychology, who dabbles in piano. "A kid from Harlem cannot possibly score as well as a kid from the San Fernando Valley (on the SAT).

"The system needs to be rebuilt throughout the education field. The rules are good and bad; good, because they might give young kids something to strive for and encourage them to concentrate on academics.

"But it's bad if they never have a chance because of poor teaching all the way up."

Carlisle transferred from University of Maine at Orono to Virginia, but attained his degree.

"I played basketball full-time, and studied part time. I had to make a choice; when I sensed I might have a career in basketball, I placed my priorities there. I asked myself: 'what will help you most?' "

"It wasn't that difficult to do the work. It was difficult though to do really well."

Following is a listing of some Celtics colleges and college majors:

College	Major Field
Jerry Sichting Purdue	Political Science Social Studies
Danny Ainge Brigham Young	Public Relations
Robert Parish Centenary	Education
Larry Bird Indiana State	Education
Greg Kite Brighan Young	Physical Ed.
Scott Wedman Colorado	Business Real Estate
Dennis Johnson Pepperdine	Black Sociology
Rick Carlisle Virginia	Psychology
David Thirdkill Bradley	Communications
Kevin McHale Minnesota	Communications
Bill Walton UCLA	Political Science
Sam Vincent Michigan State	Theater Communications

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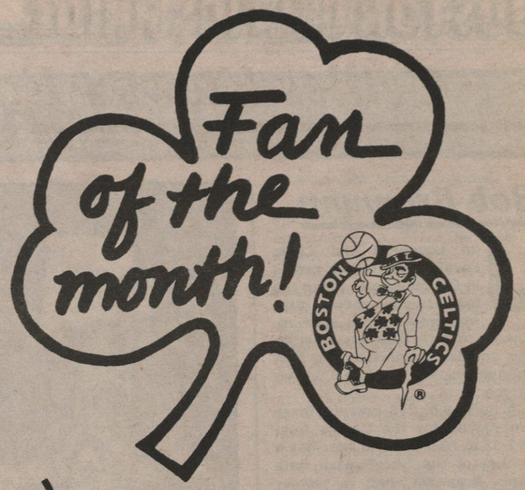

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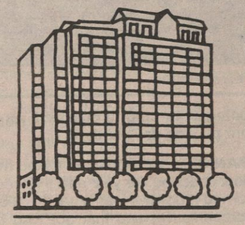

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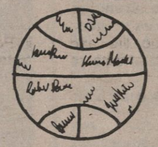

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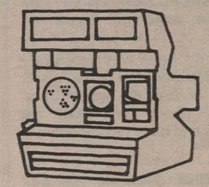

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Innerview

Bob Brannum

Jim Loscutoff and Clyde Lovelette have their places in Celtics lore as being the team's policemen-- guys who would make sure opponents didn't take liberties on their smaller teammates. But Bob Brannum was the aboriginal Boston enforcer.

A burly 6-5, 215 pounds, Brannum played for the Celtics from 1951-52 to 1954-55, and later was a member of the Sheyboygan Redskins. Brannum had a career scoring average of just 6.2 points a game, but he was one of the Celtics' top rebounders in his day. Brannum's lust for physical play can best be shown by this statistic: during his stint with the Celtics, he averaged 10 disqualifications a year.

After his playing career ended, Brannum entered private business. However, he later entered coaching, beginning at Norwich University. Later, he moved to Kenyon College in Ohio, Brannum has spent the last 16 years at Brandeis University as head basketball coach. He will retire at the end of the season.
Celtics Pride recently chatted with Brannum...

CELTICS PRIDE: How would you assess your coaching career at Brandeis?

BRANNUM: It's been very satisfying. I've been fortunate to have good teams. It's difficult to recruit to a Division 3 school. We have no scholarships and have high academic standards.

CELTICS PRIDE: How do you get players for Brandeis?

BRANNUM: I write to a lot of them. We have ex-players and alumni and we know a lot of kids who play in the area. Only about 10 percent of the athletes qualify academically to go to this school.

CELTICS PRIDE: So at Brandeis, they really are student/athletes...

BRANNUM: They're students first. Sometimes I have trouble getting practices in. I have three kids who are pre-med, and some of the kids on the team are pre-law. It's all academically-oriented. There are no scholarships.

It's really rewarding, no question about it. One of the really fine things is to see them become successful after they've left school.

CELTICS PRIDE: How did you begin your coaching career?

BRANNUM: Walter Brown (the late Celtics owner) asked me if I wanted to coach. I had been retired from basketball four years, and he had a friend at Norwich. I went there and coached six years.

Bob Brannum: Always ready to demonstrate his strength.

CELTICS PRIDE: Did you have any inkling of turning to coaching after your playing days ended?

BRANNUM: No. Someone asked me about coaching the year after I retired, I turned it down, I was a candy sales representative, and that got kind of boring. It was a good job, but I got bored. The mom and pop stores were going down the drain at the time, and I got most of my business from them.

It was a good move for me to get into coaching. I've been at it 23 years.

CELTICS PRIDE: What's this about you being a policeman with the Celtics?

BRANNUM: It was one of those things where if someone was bugging your teammate, you say, "Hey, come by once." Actually, I didn't have any more scraps as anyone else in the league. When I had fights with Harry Gallatin and people like that, it made headlines. When other people had altercations, it wasn't a big deal.

CELTICS PRIDE: You played for Boston during Red Auerbach's early days with the franchise. What was it like to play for him?

BRANNUM: Wonderful. I think the man is a great guy. He's had as much influence on my coaching as anyone. Red coached at Washington, and they won. He went to Tri-Cities, and turned them from a mediocre team to a class team. He came to Boston, which was winning 12 or 14 games a year, and made them Eastern Division champs in three years.

I doubt if there's anyone who'll ever accomplish what Red did year in and year out. His teams were winners. Basketball people knew he was good. There were those on the other side of the floor who hated him, but they respected his talent.

Anybody who ever played for Red knew that he gave him 100 percent, Red would be with you 100 percent--always. If you gave less than 100 percent, then you'd have trouble with him.

CELTICS PRIDE: What was the most memorable moment for you as a member of the Celtics?

BRANNUM: I suppose it'd be winning the Eastern Division title for the first time. We did it in New York, and people expected the Knicks to do it. The comaraderie on our team was unbelievable.

CELTICS PRIDE: What are you going to do after you retire from Brandeis?

BRANNUM: I'm not really retiring--I'll still be working in the athletic department. I just won't be coaching anymore. I'm going to sit back and enjoy the game and turn the coaching over to a younger person. After so many years, it's time to do that.

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Celtics Diary

Jerry Sichting: More Time = More Production

Jerry Sichting proved to be the quality player the Celtics anticipated when he took over the starting guard position, temporarily replacing the injured Danny Ainge, January 2nd. Sichting's strengths showed themselves fully: extremely quick, excellent open-shooter, knowledgeable at positioning, totally aware of the team game.

In the five games during Ainge's injury (sprained left ankle), Jerry shot 20-29 from the floor, including an 8-for-9 performance against New Jersey, and registered a season-high in steals (4) vs. Cleveland. These efforts, besides missing only one free throw all season---27 of 28 FT through January 14th. In the five games Sichting played with starter's minutes, Boston won four of those.

Sichting is a native of Martinsville, Indiana and won 10 letters in that state's high school athletics. In a state where high school basketball is worshipped, Sichting graduated with all-state honors, was selected to play in a Kentucky-Indiana All-Star series in 1975, and went on to Purdue University. There he averaged 9.9 ppg, set a Free Throw Shooting record (34 straight), and contributed to building a program which reached the NCAA Final Four in 1980.

Sichting played the previous five seasons with the Pacers; he had made the Indiana team in a Free Agent tryout after being cut by the Warriors in the final cut in 1979 (Sichting was the Warriors' 4th round choice). Despite having played several years in his home state and augmenting this with several appearances for the team within Indiana, Sichting decided to opt for free agency last summer.

"I felt it was best for the Pacers and for me to make a change," the 6-0 player recalled recently. He signed an offer sheet with Boston, which was matched, before the teams settled on a trade: Sichting to the Celtics for two second round draft choices.

The veteran guard recorded his impressions for Celtics Pride as the season approached the half-way point.

January 1. Indianapolis. Larry Bird and I flew to Indiana a day after we defeated the Clippers in Los Angeles. I feel better about the way the team's playing and I am fortunate to be with my family on the holidays. My wife Joni and my sons Jarad and Jason were with me and we were able to have a late Christmas with both my wife's parents (in Indianapolis) and my folks in Martinsville. We went to a party in Martinsville and I was with some of my old friends from home. We reminisced about our senior year in high school, about our unbeaten football team.

Jerry had time to play with his son.

Most of these guys went into the service and went to college under the GI bill. Several have graduated recently and are beginning their careers. I'm glad to be friends with them---they're happy for my success in professional basketball, if a little bit awed. But I see my friends every summer so there's no real change in our relationships.

Besides, I do not take my success for granted. I was in the Warriors' camp until the final cut in 1979 and it was a losing, uphill fight. They had four guards with no-cut contracts (Lloyd Free, John Lucas, Phil Smith, Sonny Parker); there was little chance I would make the team. But since I was cut so late, it was too late to catch on with another team.

For a few days, I did wonder if the sun would come up. But you learn: if things don't work out, you still have to go on and make the best of things, and be happy as you can.

I worked for a year (1979-80 NBA season) in the sporting goods business in Indianapolis, knowing I'd give pro ball another shot. When the Pacers held a Free Agent Camp the following summer, I made their team.

January 2. Indianapolis. We were ready to play tonight---for two reasons. First, we had lost twice to the Pacers here---once during the pre-season, and again in November, when Clark Kellogg beat us at the buzzer. We didn't want to lose to them agian.

K.C. put us through a challenging practice the night before: 10 to 11:30. It was ragged because we had a day and a half off for the holiday and also because several of the guys had just flown into town. But the practice, despite being ragged, helped us get rid of some of the rustiness. We were ready for Indiana.

Danny Ainge twisted his ankle in the first half and I began a series of starting and/or near starting playing minutes.

It helps my game to play with the type of All-Star starting lineup we have. They are all talented individually, and they are experienced playing together. I think every player on our bench agrees with me.

We outscored them 28-14 in the final 5:00 and pulled away, 122-104.

January 3. Boston. We traveled all morning, arriving into Boston for a game tonight against the Nets. Although it's too early to call this game a "showdown", conference and division games are important. Each win over the Nets or Philadelphia is worth 2 in the standings.

The saying is: the first game at home following a road trip is like another road game. I was tired. The team was tired. And New Jersey, which hadn't played the night before, was rested and ready. We felt if we came out sluggish, they would have jumped all over us.

But we came out positively, and dictated the tempo early. I had my most relaxed and effective game here: 36 minutes, 8-for-9 from the floor, 6 assists. We took them, 129-117.

January 6. Boston. We had one day off, on Saturday, and I think it was welcomed by all of us. I think K.C. is perceptive about our team. We do have an old team; the more time we have to rest away from games, the more legs we have for them.

I approach practice with the attitude of trying to get something out of it, whether I play well that (practice) day or not. Coaches remind players that 'you play as you practice', and I believe that's true. There are days when you're banged up or not feeling well but I still believe it's worthwhile to put in the effort.

Lee Rose, the coach at Purdue in my senior year, set up a rating system to encourage strong practices. If you were effective in practice, you received points. If you scored the highest, you started. But some players don't practice well---like me. Rose realized this soon, and junked the ratings.

I guess, for me, the pressure of the games is what's needed to keep me at my most competitive level.

January 9. Boston. We practiced lightly today; we split our previous two games, a 113-109 loss at Detroit, and a 126-95 win over Cleveland in Boston. We knew Detroit had been losing but we also knew they would play us tough. Danny tried to cut and twisted his ankle again; and Robert Parish, who was dominating Bill Laimbeer inside, fought with Laimbeer and was ejected. The game was tense and won in the final minutes---when our depth was gone.

We bounced back against Cleveland, though. We respect them, but most of the talk about Cleveland and Boston being former playoff arch-rivals originates on their side. They motivate themselves for us; we approach every game the same. We need to win against an opponent who's ready to go after us. In the third quarter, we broke the game open, coasting to an easy win.

January 14. Boston. It appears Danny Ainge is ready to resume starting; we had the weekend off after defeating the Hawks in the Garden on Friday, 115-108. I'll be coming off the bench again.

The preparation for starting and playing off the bench is not that much different. In this recent stretch, there was an element of uncertainty anyway, since Danny was day-to-day against Cleveland and Atlanta. Playing as a starter is different, though. You have to get the team off to a good start (as the point guard). You can't make errors early.

Playing off the bench has its advantages, especially when we're on the defensive end. For example, if the opponent has changed its number for a familiar play, I'm able to hear that and be prepared when they call it while I'm on the floor. On offense, I'm able to see which guard is backing off to double-team inside---so I'll know where the open area is in their defense. That's where I'll go to receive a return pass for my open jumper.

I've said I'm 'lucky' to be in Boston. Playing a role is working, and winning is fulfilling. It's simple but true: the game is not much fun when you're losing. In Indiana, we were losing, seemingly there was little improvement and no light at the end of the tunnel. I felt I had 3-4 years left as player, and I felt it was best for the Pacers and for me to make a change.

K.C. gave us the weekend off after we defeated Atlanta (I rested mostly, helped my wife Joni with the kids, and took them to the Aquarium). It was good to get away from it---the last two days off until the All-Star break. The rest helped; we went at it hard in practice.

He's Getting Quality Minutes.

Rick Carlisle: Ready and Waiting

There's an old adage that goes, "It comes to those who only stand and wait". And Celtics guard Rick Carlisle is proof of it.

Actually, there is a difference. Carlisle was sitting, not standing. He was on of the NBA's leading "pine brothers" last season, his first in the league. Carlisle played just 38 games and 179 minutes.

Things are much different for Carlisle this time around. He's already played 292 minutes, exceeding his total for 1984-85. Carlisle has missed just three outings this year.

His stats aren't much to look at--just a shade below 3.0 points a game. However, not only is Carlisle seeing more action than a year ago, but he's being used by Coach K.C. Jones at critical moments of the game, not just the infamous garbage time. In NBA parlance Carlisle is seeing quality time.

"I'm happy with the way things are going this year. I'm getting more of an opportunity to play."

"Things are going pretty well," says Carlisle, a 6-5 University of Virginia product. "I'm happy with the way things are going this year. I'm getting more of an opportunity to play. I don't think K.C. is afraid to put me in games."

"This is an easy team to play for--there are so many good players. It's a good feeling. It feels like you're helping."

The Celtics are so deep at guard---with Dennis Johnson, Danny Ainge, Jerry Sichting and Sam Vincent, plus Carlisle--that Jones wouldn't put Carlisle on the floor if he felt he were a liability. And Jones isn't hesitant to call Carlisle's number.

"I can't say if it's going to be a regular procedure, but Rick has played well," Jones says. "He's gone in against bigger guards and done well. When we see something like that, we say, 'Let's keep on doing it.' "

Carlisle hopes he can keep on contributing to the Celtics cause. Perhaps Carlisle's biggest asset is he understands his role on the team fully. He knows he's not going to come to the gym and play 45 minutes every night. But he, along with the other Boston subs, are expected to keep the bed warm while the starters are resting on the bench.

"K.C. doesn't want guys from the second unit to score a lot of points and be real fancy," says the 26-year-old Carlisle. "We try to break down the other team's defense and play solid defense ourselves."

Rick is happy for the opportunity.

Carlisle zealously tends to his appointed rounds on defense, but shooting is his speciality. He shot .550 from the floor at Maine, where he spent his first two collegiate seasons. Moving over to Virginia, Carlisle made 51.4 percent of his shots in two years with the Cavaliers.

How would Carlisle describe himself as a player?

"I don't think there's any one thing I do real well," Carlisle says. "I try to play a good all-around game. I shoot, handle the ball and pass well and play defense. Those are some of the things that have helped me get where I am now."

At the start of the season, it was unclear to Carlisle exactly where he'd fit in with the Celtics. For all he knew, he'd be in for another campaign of GT.

"I wasn't sure what kind of playing time I'd get," Carlisle says. "I was playing consistently with the second unit--the fourth guard behind Sichting. I'd play four or five minutes, then come out.

"More recently, Vincent has been playing more, and I've been the fifth guard. If there's a need for a bigger guard, I'll get minutes."

From all appearances, Carlisle wasn't even assured of a uniform this season. In training camp, not only did Boston have the incumbents at guard, but Carlos Clark, David Thirdkill (a swingman) and Andre Battle were contestants for that fifth and final backcourt spot. Being the first-round pick, Vincent was virtually a lock, unless he had an absolutely awful training camp.

Carlisle wasn't too worried about the prospects of being cut. He believed his destiny was in his own hands.

"I felt it was my spot to lose," says Carlisle, a third-round pick in the 1984 draft, "They only way I'd get cut was if I came in and played poorly. The important thing for a non-starter is to show you've improved.

"I went to the summer league in Los Angeles and showed improvement in a lot of areas. My defense was better, my shooting range was better and my overall feel of the game was better."

"I try to play a good all-around game. I shoot, handle the ball and pass well and play defense."

Boston Director of Player Personnel and assistant coach Jimmy Rodgers was asked why Carlisle made the club as opposed to one of the others.

"He doesn't make mistakes," Rodgers said.

Whereas Carlisle reported to this past camp feeling good about his chances of sticking with the team, 1984 was a different story. He was definitely nervous about his situation.

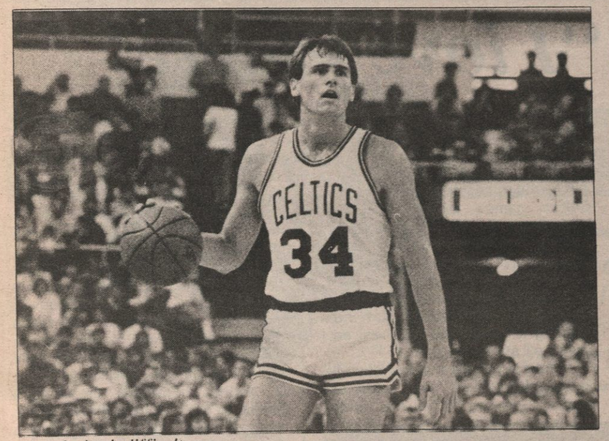
"I didn't think there was any chance at all of making the team," Carlisle says. "But it really turned out to be a blessing in disguise. The biggest blessing was Gerald Henderson (who was eventually traded to Seattle) holding out. That gave me a chance to show what I could do. I had a couple of great exhibition games and showed 'em I could play."

Playing is something Carlisle didn't do much of as a rookie. This is a 180-degree turnaround from his college days, when Carlisle had all the minutes he could handle.

"Not playing is difficult," Carlisle says. "But it's not something they didn't tell me. I knew my playing time would be sporadic-- that was expected."

There are ways for a player to grow, despite sitting most of the time. Carlisle never failed to take advantage of those opportunities.

"I worked hard in practice--those were like games for me," he says. "I played as hard as I could, and learned from Dennis and Danny. And when I did get into the game, I tried to play the same way, even if it was the last minute."



Not playing is difficult.

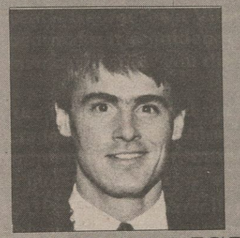
Carlisle wasn't and isn't afraid to put in overtime after practice. He has been known to stick around and indulge in three-on-three or four-on-four full court games with whoever else is willing. Even though he still sees only spot duty, Carlisle is probably in as good a physical condition as anyone on the entire club.

So it seems as if Rick Carlisle's Celtics career is shaping up rather nicely. And he'd like to see that continue.

"Ideally, I'd like to be in a situation where I play alot," Carlisle says. "But this is great--getting a few spot minutes and contributing on a winning team, that's worth more than playing a lot for a weaker team.

"I like playing for the Celtics and hope I'm here for a while. They know I'm the type of guy who'll always be ready and always stay in shape."

SELF PORTRAIT



RICK CARLISLE

OCCUPATION: Professional Basketball Player, The Boston Celtics
BIRTHDATE AND PLACE: October 27, 1959 at Ogdensburg, New York
FAVORITE MOVIE CHARACTER: Ellwood Blues---The Blues Brothers
IF I COULD BUY ANY CAR I'D BUY: Any one of Robert Parish's cars
FAVORITE ALL-TIME TV SHOW: Batman
FAVORITE ANIMAL IN THE ZOO: Giraffe
ENTREE I WOULD CHOOSE FOR MY LAST MEAL: Teriyaki Chicken
THE FOUR GUESTS AT MY FANTASY DINNER PARTY: Dan Akroyd, John Belushi, Jay Leno, Richard Nixon
FAVORITE NBA CITY (BESIDES BOSTON): Los Angeles
FAVORITE RESTAURANT: Scotch and Sirloin
FAVORITE COMEDIAN: Jay Leno
FAVORITE BOARD GAME: Scrabble
FAVORITE DRINK: Miller Lite
OLDEST PIECE OF CLOTHING: Pair of Jeans
IF I COULD CHANGE PLACES WITH AN ACTOR, I'D CHOOSE: Dan Akroyd
I WISH I KNEW HOW TO: Play Classical Music

Carlisle worked hard in practice.

Speaking of Rick Carlisle...

Danny Ainge: He comes to play every night, and every day in practice. He doesn't make mistakes--- a very steady player.

He's in a very difficult role, being in a situation where he never knows when he's needed. Some days he'll play twelve minutes, sometimes four, sometimes none. But he's never complained once. You know you get 100% out of him every night."

Jimmy Rodgers (1984): Other players appear to be more flashy, and other players may get the job done better one-on-one. But only for limited amounts of time. We prefer to have a player who's consistently working on his game, who knows the system and is committed to it.

Rick's a very consistent player. He takes care of the ball and he doesn't make mistakes. Clearly, these are the basic reasons he is on our team.

Scott Wedman: He's improved immeasurably over the past year. And you can see it. He's improved because of hard work; he's worked at his game and you can see the results.

He's a better ballhandler and he's aware all the time of getting the ball to shooters.

I like that.

And his own shooting has become more of a threat.

Michelle Ainge: "I love it here!"

By Wilma Mahoney

"I love it here," enthuses Michelle Ainge on a blustery winter night when the wind chill factor had just established the temperature at 20 below. Although admitting that San Diego, with its sunshine and mild weather, is where her dream home would be, Michelle feels that if the Ainge family ever moved there, it would be boring compared with the Boston area.

Michelle is well qualified to judge the merits of East Coast verses West Coast living. She was born and grew up in San Diego where family life for Michelle, her sister and four brothers revolved around the outdoors. She says, "San Diego lent itself to sailing, water-skiing and body surfing. We always played tennis and water-skiied as a family. Since I grew up with four brothers, we always played something. At Valhalla High School, I played softball and tennis and was also a cheerleader. 'For a girl', as my husband says, I am very athletic."

After graduating from high school, Michelle enrolled at Brigham Young University where she studied interpersonal communications, a business major dealing with interviewing workers and administrators at various companies to improve labor-management relations and increase productiviey. She completed two years at B.Y.U., and states, "It's not important for me to have a diploma, but I'd like to go back to school someday, just to learn more."

Michelle met her husband-to-be on their first day of school freshman year in health class. Although she claims it was not love at first sight, love did bloom eventually, since the Ainge's will celebrate their 7th wedding anniversary in March.

Because Danny was an ace third baseman, as well as a collegiate basketball All-American, he chose baseball as his career after graduating from B.Y.U. in 1981. Michelle notes that during the time Danny played for the Toronto Blue Jays, they, with baby daughter Ashlee, also lived in Syracuse, New York on three different occasions, where Danny played Triple-A baseball in between his stints with the Blue Jays. Baseball life consisted of much moving back and forth over the border between Toronto (a beautiful city!) and Syracuse. Michelle adds that of all the fans they've dealt with, including B.Y.U.'s, Boston's are the most loyal.

Michelle mentions that leaving Toronto for the N.B.A. was a difficult decision for Danny. She states, "He made the decision and I finally supported him in it. We went through it all together." About the move to Boston,

Michelle could stay here forever.

Michelle says, "We always thought, with a five year contract, we'll be here for five years. Now, we're looking at another six years, and when we think of moving anywhere but here, we don't like the thought. It's really growing on us, and I think we could stay here forever."

She continues, "We always try to figure out what the future may hold, but I feel we can't make any plans of where we want to go, or what we want to do, until we figure out the business opportunities for Danny once his career is over. His whole life has been sports, not just basketball, so it makes sense that the rest of his life will be sports."

For now, the Ainge's are settled in Newton, but this will change soon, since they have sold their Newton home and purchased one in Wellesley. Michelle looks forward to decorating their new house and moving their three children into the new home.

Daughter Ashlee is six years old and attends first grade. Right now Michelle tells us Ashlee is into tap and ballet dancing and gymnastics. She enjoys coloring and reading, telling stories to her two younger brothers. Four year old Austin likes gymnastics, television and He-Man, and also goes to pre-school classes. The Ainge's youngest, two year old Tanner, "does anything his older brother and sister do. "Michelle says the three children get along amazingly well, which is good because they entertain each other.

Although Ashlee has attended Celtics games with her mother, Michelle says she doesn't pay a lot of attention to the action on the court, noting "Ashlee likes the social scene. She likes to talk to people and eat popcorn. Austin is starting to say, 'I want to go to basketball.' Now he's begging to go to Dad's games, so I think we'll start taking him."

Michelle tells us that the most difficult thing about the basketball season is trying to have a normal home life with a very abnormal schedule. She also cites lack of privacy, because "A lot of people want to know us or say they know us just because of who Danny is. Even with our children, you get to a point where you really see this and can figure out who is a real friend and why."

Although she loves to shop, Michelle has stopped taking her husband on these excursions, saying, "Before, it was my idea of a nice family thing to take the family shopping and for Danny to come shopping with me, but about a year ago, I decided that I couldn't take him anymore. It was embarassing to me and to him. People would get crazy and say, 'Wow, Danny Ainge is in the store.' When we got to the checkout counter, people would look at everything we bought. I just felt I'd much rather go alone so nobody knows who I am. I can buy what I want without being screened."

Besides shopping, Michelle finds time for tennis, tap dancing lessons and aerobics. She also teaches a women's class at church and reads as much as possible having recently finished Belva Plain's *EVERGREEN* and *THE COLOR PURPLE.*

In the off season, the Ainge's retreat to their condo in Provo, Utah, where B.Y.U. is located. Summer is a time of rest and relaxation for the family in this small university town. Michelle says, "We live one minute from the golf course, where Danny plays and we've got a swimming pool at our condo. It's the kind of place where you go to the movies a lot. We swim and ride bikes during the day and the children play outside in the creek. We play tennis and Danny runs his basketball camp. It's real small townish in Provo, and our friends treat us as normal people." One gets the feeling from Michelle that this normalcy during the summer is a welcome respite from the hectic Boston Celtics winter life.

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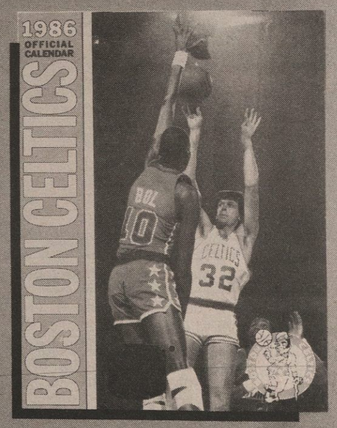

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K.C.s Corner

"I feel good about our team, but then, we'll need to be playing well in a tough time of our regular season schedule."

A long Challenging Journey.

NBA seasons are a long, challenging journey, filled with difficult stretches of games, injuries to players, unforeseen events. We are playing the most strenuous schedule of our season: eight games in two weeks, 11 games in 17 days, three back-to-back games on consecutive nights, and games against the Los Angeles Lakers and Philadelphia 76ers.

I don't---I can't---think too much about the media "big games" versus the Lakers and the Sixers. These games are wars (They do require high concentration and attention to detail). Yet I can't, as any coach can't, look too far ahead. Denver is a strong club. Sacramento, or the Nets, or Milwaukee play well against us. We face a team's best effort every night, as opponents look to start winning streaks against the Celtics.

As we were emerging from our own miseries after Christmas, winning at Indiana, Danny Ainge sprained his ankle and our depth delivered. Jerry Sichting found himself as a Celtic in my opinion; his shooting was loose and confident, his total game was comfortable, his defense was a definite contribution, his feel for the court is important in our team game. Injuries test teams over a season and the better ones adjust. As Ainge sat out and gradually returned with longer playing minutes off the bench, we nevertheless won 6 of 7. Winning teams must prepare for possible injuries and win anyway.

Injuries are part of what are unforeseen events. I think there I am responsible in this area at least two ways: first, I am in daily communication with Ray Melchiorre to understand each player's injury situation. Fortunately, to this point in the season, our ailments have been minor.

Judging the fatigue factor of the team during each part of the season is another method to prevent injury.

Jerry Sichting found himself as a Celtic.

Also, I do not want to leave our game-night efforts on the practice floor. If we play eight games in eleven days, I'll use the practice time for correcting errors, give them time to break a sweat, and get them out of here. Cultivating year-long concentration is the goal. It provides the foundation for individual game intensity. I suspect these factors also deter injury.

I did not regard our slight let down in December as an emergency---but we knew we had to play out of it, we knew what had to be done, we knew we had to improve on our weaknesses.

The January 2-3 back-to-back games with Indiana and New Jersey pleased me immensely. We ran a hard practice the night before the Pacer game in Indianapolis, and the team played an aggressive and intelligent game to defeat Indiana (a 28-12 surge to end the game). The following night against the Nets at home was one of our most difficult games of the season. We were coming off a long trip to play New Jersey, who is a team ready to challenge us. And the Nets were resting and waiting to surprise us at the Garden.

Our team matched the Nets' floor strategy courageously; they tried to run us---outrun a tired team---but we hung with it, grabbed an early 10-5 lead, and the game became ours. We led 20-19 with 6:00 remaining in the 1st quarter and in the 2nd quarter we led 52-37. At the end of three, we had a 108-90 margin, on our way to a key win.

We have been plagued at times this season by losing leads; the Nets for example cut that eighteen-point lead to six and they had the ball before we finally took control. A number of reasons contribute: sometimes we unconsciously relax and our opponent sees its chance. They feel backed into a corner and then start firing. Once the momentum shifts, even 25-point leads might prove insignificant. Once the momentum shifts---either team can win. Overtime periods are similar. Those too are as unpredictable as a roll of the dice.

My usual response to correcting this is through defense, i.e., controlling the tempo by working harder on the defensive end. I'm constantly watching on the bench to know when the right time is for signalling timeouts. A coach's ongoing game contributions: judging game tempo for timeouts; substitutions; signalling defenses and offensive plays, half-time and game-end strategy.

Our defeat in early January to Detroit was rough---a squandered lead in this one, too. Robert Parish was ejected for fighting, Bill Walton and Danny Ainge were injured, and the Pistons were returning home after a losing streak on the road. Isiah Thomas scored 39 for them in a contest where everything went their way.

Losses however do not mean disaster---if you bounce back the next game and win. The following night we returned home and defeated an apparently flat Cavs' team, 126-95. The Cavs still have that playoff confidence; but they were playing the second of back-to-back games and seemed to be fatigued.

We concluded the early-month stretch against a streaking Atlanta team. If Cleveland was struggling, Atlanta was developing real elements of team confidence. And by a very talented group of players, including Glenn Rivers (who had missed earlier games against us), Kevin Willis, and Dominque Wilkens. But we were ready; Robert played super (16 points, 15 rebounds, 3 blocks) and Larry Bird's game (29 points, 7 assists) and Dennis Johnson's (24 points, 8 assists) led an involved team effort.

At this time of the year, teams are pulling together. They are ironing out substitution patterns, knowing their personnel better, and gathering their forces for the playoff run. The games are closer as the playoff picture becomes more focused. I feel good about our team, but then, we'll need to be playing well in a tough time of our regular season schedule.

M. L. Carr

Who is Rick Carlisle?

Rick is a classic example of a guy who comes into training camp and isn't expected to make the team. But he's done all the things he had to do to make the club. He's made it happen.

A couple of years ago, people looked at him as another guy to fill practice lanes and make the sprint lines shorter. But Rick had a great training camp and made the team.

You can measure how a guy can run or jump, but you can't measure his heart. Rick came in with plenty of heart and did everything they asked him to do-- carry the veterans' bags, stay later after practice for extra shooting.

That's not to say Rick doesn't have abiltiy. You don't get to the NBA without ability. But Rick has a great attitude. Sometimes, the difference between making the NBA and not making it can be five extra minutes. Rick will spend those extra five minutes working out, shooting or studying film.

Every player goes though this--he has to prove he belongs in the NBA. Not every kid who has a uniform of an NBA team believes he belongs in the league. You've got to prove it by getting playing time, to show what you can do.

It's good to see Rick get some quality time. K.C. Jones is showing confidence in Rick, and he's coming through. A writer wants to write, a singer wants to sing and a player wants to play.

In a team setting, though, there are role players. When you're sitting on the bench, if you're smart, you're picking up things, learning tricks, scouting the other teams and learning how to exploit their weaknesses. Havlicek did it, Sam Jones did it, K.C. did it, right on down the line. And Rick did it and is still doing it.

Rick is a shooter. He has tremendous confidence in his shot. He's not that fast, but he's a tough player to press because he handles the ball well and sees the floor well. He'd better be able to see the floor well, because he can't run past people!

I like Rick's jump shot and his court savvy. I think he has a chance to have a good career in the NBA. To play 40 minutes a night? No, not on this team. But the biggest thing for Rick is he's able to make things happen in very important moments. K.C. is putting Rick in the game in important situations--you have to get the coach to have confidence in you. Rick understands that role. He doesn't get into an ego thing.

Rick handles the ball well and has confidence that he can put the ball in the hole. He can also pick out the open guy and get the ball to him.

The first time I saw Rick, I thought he was just another cocky rookie coming in. He wasn't really cocky, he had a lot of confidence in his ability. He'd challenge anybody one-on-one or best out of 10 from the three-point line. He'd never race anybody running up and down the court or have a jumping contest against them. He challenged people in the things he knew he could beat you at.

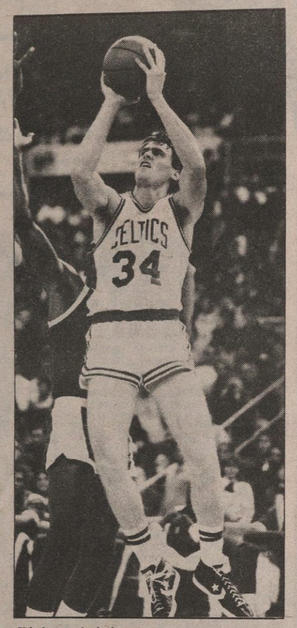
* * * * *

The team is playing well, but we're not at the point where we will be later in the season. This team has so much talent and a super record. After the All-Star break, you'll see the Celtics gear up for the playoffs. They're fighting to get something back--the championship.

The Celtics have lost a couple of games on the road recently. You do lose a couple of games here and there. When they lost the game against the Knicks--after having a 25-point lead--it was tough. Those we're some of the things you try to stay away from. You get lax, saying we're much better. It's not good to look back on what you've accomplished and what you have.

One reason for the "slump" was the team wasn't shooting the ball very well. Larry Bird wasn't shooting as well as he can, and Dennis Johnson picked up some of the slack and was more aggressive offensively. D.J. doesn't really like to do that--he'd rather pass the ball off to the other guys.

Another thing to remember is teams still get up to play the Celtics. I remember when I was with Detroit, if you beat the Celtics your season was halfway done.



Rick made it happen.

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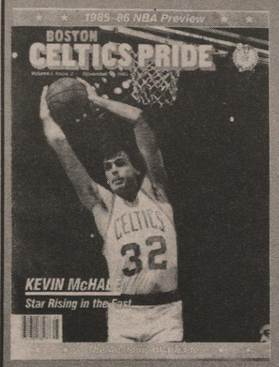

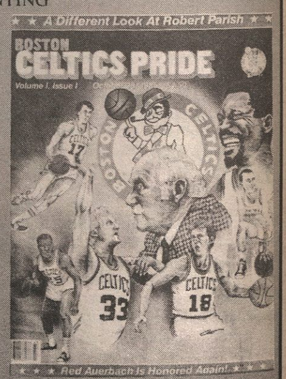

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Celtics-Sixers Rivalry Spans Three Decades

It was minutes after the Celtics had struggled past their ancient rivals the Philadelphia 76ers at the Spectrum, November 26. Boston and Philadelphia **never** play a meaningless game; even the Pre-Season games are simulated epics. But like the miracle of the changing seasons each year, this 98-91 Celtic win had produced another major turning point in one of the team's seasons.

Yes, the Celts were rolling at the time---starting their season at 19-3. But the event was significant for the Sixers. After the game, 2nd-year player Charles Barkley, the emerging Sixers star, called a closed door meeting, without the coaches. Apparently a ritualitic mantle had been passed, because previously, meetings had been frequently summoned by the Sixers Captain, Julius Erving.

The Sixers players disclosed few details of the meeting. But two important overt conclusions were obvious. First, the Sixers, presenting a new starting lineup of Erving at Guard and Bobby Jones at Forward (with Mo Cheeks, Moses Malone, and Barkley), went 12-1 since, including a 5-1 west coast trip. And the injured Andrew Toney practiced with the team for the first time, January 14.

Second, Barkley's new presence at the head of the Sixer attack forms another stage for the richly historical Celtics-76ers rivalry. Barkley instantly sensed the magnitude of the rivalry in his rookie season. He openly worried during last regular season that the Sixers could not win in Boston. "The fans are **always** more excited when Boston plays the Philadelphia 76ers in the Garden," Barkley said at the time. He proved prophetic; the Celtics defeated the Sixers in the playoffs in May, winning the three games the teams played in the Garden.

It is meaningful that the game which turned the Sixer season around was a game against Boston. This is a rivalry which essentially began in the Boston Garden in 1953 when the Celtics defeated the Syracuse Nats in FOUR overtimes to capture a mini-playoff series, 2-0 in games. The entry of young outstanding players in the eighties on both teams---from Larry Bird, Robert Parish, Julius Erving, and Moses Malone in the early eighties to Barkley, Toney, Kevin McHale, Danny Ainge, and Sam Vincent now---ensures there will be a continuity.

Changes have taken place. In the 1953 game, 25-year old Bob Cousy scored a playoff record (since broken) 50 points, including twenty-five in the 4 OTs. Syracuse is the historical ancestor to the Philadelphia 76er team: the Nats moved to Philly in 1962-63. Before that season, the Nats were the Celtics Dynasy's unexpected foe, not as talented individually as the Wilt Chamberlain-Warrior teams, but a team which nevertheless had talent and a strong team chemistry.

Originally, the Warriors played in Philadelphia, but they moved west to become the San Francisco (now Golden State) Warriors in 1962. The Nats moved from mid-state Syracuse to the larger market and their team changed; veteran Nat stars like Dolph Schayes, George Yardley, Larry Costello, Paul Seymour and John Kerr faded gradually from prominance. This allowed the new 76ers to develope a new Philadelphia identity.

Ironically, the 76ers became fully a Philadelphia team when the franchise acquired the transplanted Philadelphian Chamberlain at mid-season in 1964-65. As the Nats-Celtics provided exciting matchups in the fifties, Celtics-76ers brought the rivalry to the apex of the sport world.

* * * * *

Bob Cousy's brilliant playoff performance against the Nats in 1953 was the exception to the rule of the franchises' earliest rivalry. Until 1956-57, when the Celtics had Bill Russell in the pivot, the Nats dominated the Celtics in the playoffs. A nucleus of Bill Sharman-Bob Cousy-Ed Macauley could not compete with a Nats team which had rebounding (Schayes), scoring (Paul Seymour and Schayes) and assists (Seymour). Before Russell, George Mikan was the dominant pivot player---muscular, offensive-minded, and a fighter.

But the Nats captured an NBA championship in 1954-55, overtaking Mikan, and on the way, defeating the Celtics in the playoffs for the second time. Before Russell, the Nats won 3 playoff series, the Celtics one series.

With the entrance of Russell, the teams reversed roles; the Celtics now had defense and rebounding (Russell) to complement a new scorer (Heinsohn) The speed, defense outside, and ballhandling completed the team around the dominating inside game. Players like Cousy, Sharman, Frank Ramsey, K.C. Jones, Sam Jones, Tom Sanders formed an impenetrable force. This team would win eight consecutive championships; they lost in 1957-58 to St. Louis after Russell injured his ankle in Game 3 of the finals.

Yet while the Celtics **always** won ---their nemesis remained the Nationals "There are few places like the gym in Syracuse," Johnny Most, Voice of the Celtics recalled recently. "The bleachers were close, the crowds rowdy, the atmosphere completely intimidating. And threatening to the refs, too." The Celts rolled to the 1959-60 title, but their most difficult playoff series again was against the Nats.

Boston and Syracuse won every home game; in the 7th at the Garden, Syracuse led by 12 through the middle stages of the game, but heroics by Russell and Ramsey delivered the series to the Celtics, 130-125.

* * * * *

Bill Russell against Wilt Chamberlain probably constructed the foundation for the success of the NBA. Russell was lithe, quick, near-religiously committed to the team game, and the Master of Defense. Chamberlain was a heavyweight, powerful, proud of his ability to master any part of the game if he so willed it, and the greatest Scorer of perhaps all time. Their rivalry was intense and tore at the depths of each man's (and each team's) pride and emotion. It was great sport, great theater, and it helped create basketball as a television sport.

The Celtics and the 76ers met four times in the playoffs from 1964-65 through 1967-68. The itinerant Wilt would return to the west coast after '68 but not before these magnificent playoff highlights:

1964-65. The scene in the Boston Garden became bedlam; Boston, with their five-straight NBA title string dangling, was saved when John Havlicek stole Hal Greer's inbound pass, sealing the 110-109 Game 7 win. Key figures: Havlicek, Sam Jones, Ton Sanders for Boston. Greer, Chet Walker, Lucious Jackson, Chet Walker, and Coach Alex Hannum for the Sixers.

1965-66. Boston was nosed out by the Sixers during the regular season but stunned the Sixers in Game 1 in Philly, 115-96. Boston later won a key 4th game in Boston, 114-108 in OT. Key figures: the retiring Celtics Coach Auerbach, Larry Siegfried, K.C. Jones. Billy Conningham and Wally Jones for the Sixers.

1966-67. A Sixer Avalanche: Philadelphia sustained a 68-13 regular season level of play into the playoffs. They won the opening game in Philadelphia, 127-113 and followed it with a 107-102 Game 2 win in Boston. Philadelphia's starting unit: Greer-Jones-Chamberlain-Jackson-Walker. For Boston, rookie playing-coach Russell.

1967-68. The Celtics had heard the roar: "Boston Is Dead!" from the taunting Philadelphia crowd the previous season, but they changed the script, rebounding from a 3-1 deficit in games. They won the title by winning Game 5 and Game 7 in Philadelphia. Key Figures: Russell, Bailey Howell, Siegfried, Don Nelson, Havlicek. For the Sixers: the misfiring outside shooters and the injured Billy Cunningham, who missed the series with a broken wrist.

* * * * *

If the departures of Russell and Chamberlain meant a temporary lull in the Sixer-Celtics rivalry, New York's emergence as an NBA champion in 1970 also redirected the attention of teams and public alike. Boston and New York were the rivalry from 1972-1974. The Sixers fell into the basement, finishing, for example, 9-73! in 1972-73.

Jo Jo White, Dave Cowens, Nelson, and Havlicek, under Tommy Heinsohn had limited warfare with the George McGinnis-led Sixers of the mid-70's (Objectively, the Celtics rebuilt quicker then the Sixers). But the major renewal of the Celtics-Sixers rivalry occurred when Larry Bird entered the picture in 1979. At this point, Julius Erving was finally instituted as the best veteran player in the game (other than centers). From the first joust between the Erving-Sixers and Bird-Celtics, excitement, accomplishment, and championships followed furiously. High lights included:

1979-80. Erving, after the 1st Pre-Season game against Bird, commented, "Larry is good and necessary for the game." The Celtics complete the best single-season turnaround by winning the regular season title. But Erving and the Sixers defeat the C's, 4-1 in the playoffs. Key figures: Dave Cowens in his last season, new Boston Coach fitch. Coach Billy Cunningham, Darryl Dawkins, Henry Bibby.

1980-81. The teams finish even in the regular season but Boston wins because of a final day victory. In the playoffs, Boston rebounds from a 7-point deficit in the final two minutes of Game 5, trailing 3-1 in games. They go on to win the series and the title, the 1st of Bird's career. Key figures: Cedric Maxwell, Robert Parish, Kevin McHale, Bird, Mo Cheeks and Andrew Toney, Bobby Jones and Erving.

1981-82. Boston wins the regular season easily (the Celtics won 18 straight games at one point); but after trailing by 3-1 in games in the playoffs, Boston is halted after winning Games 5 & 6. Philadelphia stuns the C's in Game 7 in Boston. Key figures: Rick Robey, injured Tiny Archibald; Toney, Caldwell Jones, Bobby Jones, and Coach cunningham.

1984-85. Boston won the series easily, jolting most experts who expected a classic. Bird stole the ball from Toney to clinch Game 5 and the series 4-1. Key Figures: Danny Ainge, Parish, Coach K.C. Jones; Erving, Barkley Cheeks, retiring Coach Cunningham.

Young Teams Rise Up Each Night to Challenge Celtics, Lakers, Sixers

By Bob Schron

K. C. Jones, the 8-year veteran coach, and the veteran of eight seasons as a player, stood in the midst of probing writers in late December.

The Celtics were slumping and they had greased their slide with a disastrous loss Christmas Day in New York. That afternoon, a Knicks team, spurred by rookies Patrick Ewing and Gerald Wilkens, had surprised the veteran Celtics team.

"You see," pointed out Coach Jones, "We're getting surprised. Players are coming at us, and we haven't realized yet how good these new players are.

"Players like Kevin Willis of Atlanta, Roy Hinson of Cleveland, Karl Malone of Utah, and Rolando Blackman of Dallas are no longer in awe of the Celtics.

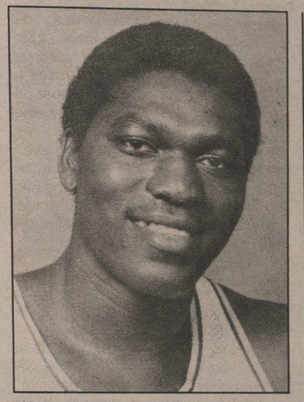
"They're young, strong, and have no respect."

How general is the trend? Are younger teams beginning to knock some of the stronger teams off their accustomed place at the top of the standings?

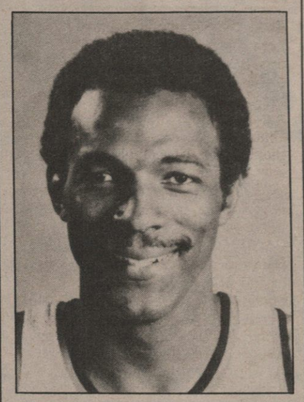
Preliminary research certainly indicates change. The Nets, led by rookie coach Dave Wohl and 1st-year assistant Paul Silas, are mounting a serious challenge, now, at the 76ers. The Bullets have turned over their personnel---featuring Manute Bol, the superior off-guard Jeff Malone, and the young veteran, Cliff Robinson. They have improved their record by five games over a similar time a year ago.

Some of the more mysterious events have taken place in the Central Division. Don Nelson turned the veteran Bucks over last year---Bob Lanier with Alton Lister, Junior Bridgeman with Terry Cummings. Yet the Bucks have been injured this season, and the youthful giants in the Central are the Atlanta Hawks (Dominique Wilkens is an MVP candidate; Glenn Dock Rivers a fundamentally strong-dunking-guard). The Hawks swept through Detroit over the New Year, and despite the latter's strong playoff last year, the Pistons are struggling to keep up.

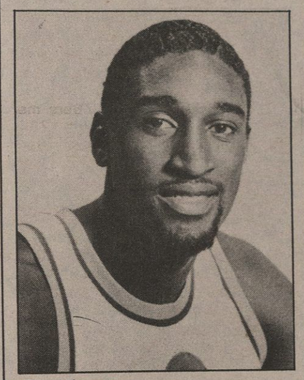
Another mystery: Cleveland. The young nucleus is apparently there---Melvin Turpin at Center, Hinson, John Bagley, a late-coming Keith Lee. But they are spinning their wheels, mostly because they are no longer able to surprise people, as they had a year ago. Indiana---are they still too young? A lineup of Vern Fleming, Terrance Stansbury, Clark Kellogg, Herb Williams, Steve Stipanovich and Wayman Tisdale is fresh and multi-talented. Yet they are 10-27 at mid-year.



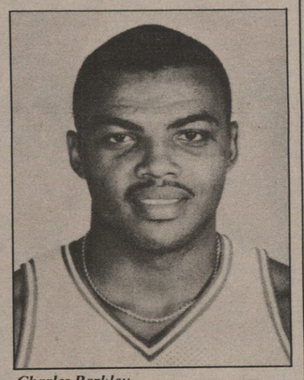
Akeem Olajuwon



Clyde Drexler



Roy Hinson



Charles Barkley

"We are not as good as Los Angeles and Boston," stated Doug Moe, and the Denver Coach echoed Frank Layden of Utah, and George Karl of the Cavs.

"Our hope is to shock teams," Moe stated. "We want to play a little crazy, open, keep the game close, and then win it.

"But we're not as good as the best."

Bill Fitch, Coach of the Houston Rockets, recognized this predicament last season, but remained hopeful for his Akeem Olajuwon-Ralph Sampson Rockets. "But we don't play smart," moaned veteran Robert Reid. Houston had a 20-1 home record at mid-year; away from the Summit, the young team was 5-13. Seattle has committed to a youth and rebuilding program, bouyed by Xavier McDaniel. "Bernie Bickerstaff is lucky," observed one coach. "They are willing to give him time." There may not be much time left for Gerald Henderson in Seattle. Apparently Henderson and Bickerstaff do not see eye to eye.

Utah, with Malone, new point guard John Stockton, and the fine 2nd-year player Thurl Bailey are "only close, but not there" says Layden. Jones in Boston only laughs: "That's what they want you to think. Then they sneak up on you."

"The problem for young teams is that some nights they have their game together," Says Jimmy Rodgers. "Other nights, they can't find each other. His reference---the Chicago Bulls, with Orlando Woolridge, Sidney Green, and of course, the instant superstar, 23-year old Michael Jordan.

"Some nights, the Bulls will climb over you. Other nights, you execute, and you can control the game," remarked Rodgers.

The Lakers have the aging veteran Abdul-Jabbar; beyond that, the age burdens only the bench, where minutes are fewer anyway. The Celtics and the Sixers are slightly older throughout their key personnel (Parish, Johnson, and Walton on Boston; Erving, B. Jones, and Malone on Philadelphia). Perhaps this is why observers of the league slightly favor the Lakers over the Celtics and the Sixers of the "Big Three."

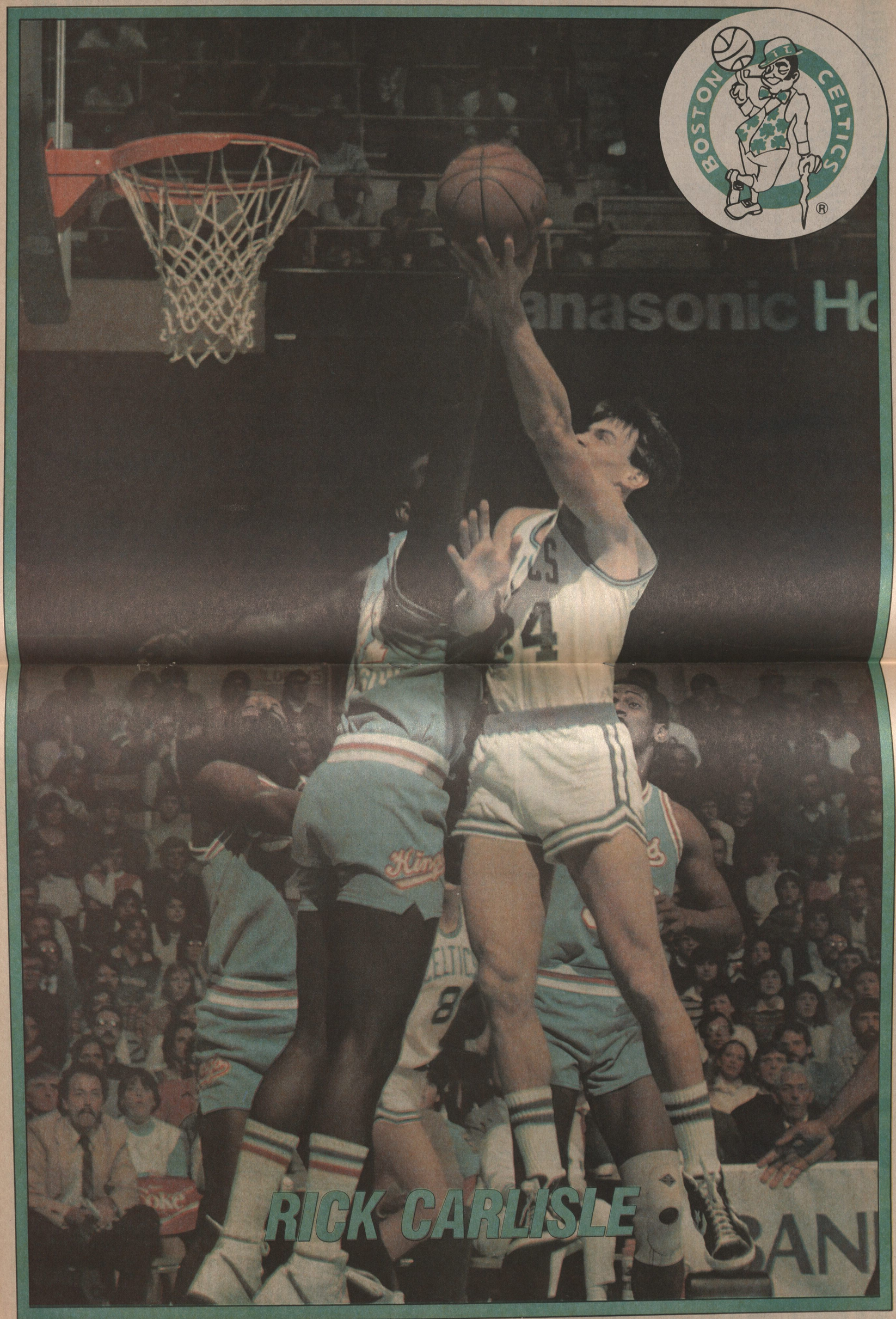
The standard coaching message is teams like the Celtics must be ready every night because the challenges are real. With a mid-season 28-8 record, the C's led Milwaukee by 6, Houston by 5, the Nets by 8 games in the loss column. Six of the youthful teams have near .500 records (Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, Dallas, Utah, and Washington). The Celtics greatest advantage: consistency.

In the West, the Lakers have fast-breaked away from another young challenger---Portland (Bowie, Drexler, Kersey, Vandeweghe). Portland's fine 25-18 mark has been obscure in the gusts of the Lakers express. Portland as yet seemingly cannot challenge Los Angeles---but they surprised the Celtics in November in Boston, the C's only home loss.

The best remedy: "Control the tempo with persistent defense," claims Jones. And don't let the young players sneak up on you.

The Great Youths

Mark Aguirre	Dallas	26
Danny Ainge	Boston	27
Charles Barkley	Philadelphia	23
Rolando Blackman	Dallas	27
Sam Bowie	Portland	25
Terry Cummings	Milwaukee	25
Clyde Drexler	Portland	24
Patrick Ewing	New York	24
A.C. Green	Los Angeles	23
Roy Hinson	Cleveland	25
Michael Jordan	Chicago	23
Jeff Malone	Washington	25
Karl Malone	Utah	23
Xavier McDaniel	Seattle	23
Kevin McHale	Boston	27
Larry Nance	Phoenix	27
Akeem Olajuwon	Houston	24
Sam Perkins	Dallas	25
Alvin Robertson	San Antonio	24
Ralph Sampson	Houston	24
Derek Smith	L.A. Clippers	25
Isiah Thomas	Detroit	25
Wayman Tisdale	Indiana	23
Melvin Turpin	Cleveland	25
Sam Vincent	Boston	23
James Worthy	Los Angeles	25


BOSTON CELTICS
RICK CARLISLE

Celtics Confidential

As the Lakers and the Sixers make visits to the Garden in the span of five days, at least some answers to how the great three teams match up should be provided, For the Sixers, the moves of **Julius Erving** to Guard and **Bobby Jones** to starting Forward have lifted them back on their feet. If **Andrew Toney** returns to form by the start of the playoffs, Philadelphia saved itself by making this short-term change.

The Lakers, by the form, remain powerful, a unit registering "10" in coaching, playmaking **(Magic),** scoring **(Abdul-Jabbar),** defense **(Cooper),** speed, talent **(Worthy),** and bench **(Lucas,** et.al.**).**

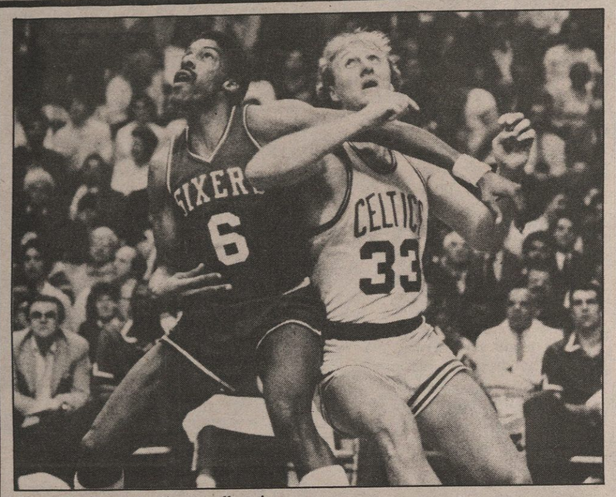
Several answers to heretofore imponderables will be provided for **K.C. Jones'** team. For example, How well will **Robert Parish** be able to muscle **Abdul-Jabbar?** How effectively has **Bill Walton** adjusted to short minutes off the bench?

How long will **Larry Bird** be able to play a defense/offense role versus the heavyweights---without **Cedric Maxwell?** Is the Celtic bench enough of a unit, and talented enough, to enable the Celtics to control the game's tempo? If the games are close, the Celts have the clear advantage--- a starting five who combine experience, talent, and excellent late-game play. Among effective bench play, defense, and coaching, ways must be created to keep the game-winning shots in the hands of Bird. Or DJ. Or Parish, Or **Kevin McHale** (who neither big team can stop). Or **Danny Ainge.**

Willis Reed, Hawks Assistant Coach, feels Walton appears to be filling the Celtics' need. "He allows the Celtics to have rested frontcourt players. Certainly, no big man passes the ball better---and he's with a team which will take advantage of his talents. Most importantly; he's the type of player you want on your team in the playoffs."

Reed has first-hand experience about preparing for the playoffs over the full regular season. He did this as a player in 1972-73 after knee surgery and won the Playoff MVP.

Appearances: Red Auerbach, Tommy Heinsohn, K.C. Jones, Steve Kuberski, Hank Finkel, and **David Cowens** appeared at the New England Sports Museum "Incredible Legends" concert, starring **Roy Orbison** and **Bo Diddley** at Symphony Hall in Boston, January 19...**Kevin McHale** posed for a poster promoting milk for the New England Dairy and Food Council...**Jeff Cohen,** former Celtics Assistant General Manager, and now an official at Brandeis, is organizing the testimonial dinner for **Bob Brannum.** Brannum is a former



The Doctor got the Sixers well again.

Celtics player (1951-55) and is retiring as Brandeis Coach after fifteen seasons...**Larry Bird** and **Scott Wedman** appeared at **Louise Boland's** (Boland formerly trained the Celtics in aerobics from 1983-85) Fokus Fitness studio on Rte. 135 in Framingham...**Wedman** is tentatively set to appear in Everett at a dinner honoring that town's recreation program. The program is headed by Everett resident, **Herbie Kramer...**

Nets' Coach **Dave Wohl,** 1st year coach and candidate for Coach of the Year, made these observations about the Celtics and **Dennis Johnson** after the C's 129-117 win over Wohl's team: "They won the game in the last four minutes. For reasons which also make them a great team. They maintain their poise. They play clinging defense, and they take what the defense gives them when they have the ball. Johnson comes along when the game's on the line. He knows when to take over and when the play should flow..." According to **Rick Weitzman,** Celtics Scout, Pistons' rookie **Joe Dumars** "is an off-guard who will be a **force** in this league"... Reportedly, **Larry Brown,** Kansas Coach, might be in line for the Knicks' job next season...**Bill Walton's** major adjustment to this point is "to play consistently every night in short periods of time." Walton is consistent in this feelings about being in Boston: He is delighted to be on a team which is first place...**Rick Carlisle** is another Green Team player who has to struggle to play consistently with unpredictable playing time. Speaking of his mental approach off the bench and his playing goal in this role, Carlisle said, "I want to make the most of my minutes for myself---and to help the rest of the players I'm out there with play as a unit. It's important to contribute in any way, not just on the stat sheet."

K.C. Jones has stated that he wants the bench, as part of their role, to play conservatively. Carlisle concurred: "You don't want to jump in and take the first shot. You need to come in, work the defense, break (the defense) down, and take the best shot possible."

A Carlisle-**Sam Vincent** duo, in principle at least, resembles the 1980-81 championship tandem of **Chris Ford-Tiny Archibald.** Ford read the defense masterfully---as an off-guard. Archibald created the offense by penetrating and scoring...

The Voice, Johnny Most, is scheduled to call play-by-play of the "Shoot for the Stars" media/neighborhood youth charity game for the Kennedy Memorial Hospital, January 25...

Vincent took the game tape of the Cleveland game home with him; he studied his shooting motion of his 1 for 9 (from the field) form. "I think I'm hesitating on my shot and not shooting smoothly on the way up," he stated before viewing...**David Thirdkill** played actively in the final quarter against the Cavs before (1) spraining an ankle, and (2) a near fight with celebrated Cavs 1st-round choice, **Keith Lee.**

Mike Thibault, Chicago Bulls Assistant Coach and Scout, feels that over the second half of the season "the Celtics bench will solidify. The impressive quality about the Celtics bench is their scoring power: Wedman, **Jerry Sichting,** Walton, and Vincent." Thibault thinks Vincent will play well with more playing time. In Thibault's view, there is a critical difference between rookie players like Vincent and **A.C. Green** of the Lakers, and other rookies who are drafted by teams with losing records. Vincent and Green learn from their teammates how to win. The tradition of the Celtics and Lakers teaches new people. It permeates the organization and the veteran players.

"Larry Bird will not let guys lose. He has the will to compete hard no matter what the situation is. He refuses to lose. This is the type of attitude which characterizes the Celtics team."

Why is a situation like Indiana's different for **Wayman Tisdale?** Don't the Pacers have players from winning systems, like **Quinn Buckner** (Celtics and Bucks) and **Clint Richardson** (Sixers)? "Buckner and Richardson are players who play supportive roles, so they aren't as influential on the floor. And that still counts."

Tommy Heinsohn, doing color on Sportschannel, has nicknamed Vincent "The Accelerator"...Interesting result of the media's criticism of Coach Jones' limited use of the bench during the team's mild slide: The bench garnered more minutes and the team won 7 of their next 8 heading into a road weekend in Indiana and Atlanta...**George Morrow,** former Celtics draft choice (38, 1981, Creighton) is a part-time assistant coach at Memphis State. His former coaching work was done under Willis Reed at Creighton. His present student: William Bedford, Memphis's All-American Center... **Bones McKinney,** former Celtic under Red Auerbach, is doing color for ACC television basketball... **Brett Harris,** former Celtics ballboy, is a freshman at Shaw College in Georgia ...**Steven Breault** of Ashland MA is doing some photography for **Celtics Pride.**

Doug Moe, Denver Coach, commented that his Denver team is simply not as good as western rival, Los Angeles. But, "We are determined to play our fast-paced game, even against them. If we play our rhythm, and establish our pace, then even the Lakers will worry about us." Moe did not compare the Celtics and the Lakers, but did compare the "unique" players each team has.

"We have trouble stopping McHale---he posts up and overpowers you. The Lakers problem is **James Worthy.** Not as big as Kevin, but unbelievably quick.

"Don't get me wrong---the Birds, the Magics, the DJs, the Kareems are great players. But these two are unique problems."

GAME BY GAME - REVIEW

January 2, at Indianapolis
Celtics 122, Indiana 104

Larry Bird returned to the Hoosier State and treated the home folks to one of his best performances of the year. The Indiana State product scored 27 points, grabbed 13 rebounds and handed out 8 assists. Dennis Johnson played brilliantly as well, scoring a game high 29 points (on 14 of 20, shooting from the floor). Johnson also had four assists and five steals.

All five Pacers starters scored in double-figures. Wayman Tisdale and Vern Fleming had 18 points apiece.

January 3, at Boston
Celtics 129, New Jersey 117

The Nets out-rebounded the Celts 43-31, but the Celtics nevertheless managed to win fairly easily. Boston's 236th consecutive sellout crowd was treated to 29 points and 10 rebounds by Larry Bird and Dennis Johnson's 24-point, 8-rebound effort. Kevin McHale chipped in with 23 scores.

Boston, which has been having some shooting problems this season, came through with another hot night from the floor. The Celtics hit 59 percent of their field goal tries.

Albert King and Connecticut native Mike Gminski had 20 points each for the Nets. Buck Williams had 19 points and 11 rebounds.

The Celtics played without Danny Ainge, who had a sprained ankle.

January 8, at Boston
Celtics 126, Cleveland 95

This one was over after the first 12 minutes, during which Boston outscored the Cavaliers, 31-19. The Celtics went on to pad their lead every quarter thereafter.

Larry Bird led the way with 25 points (on 11-20 shooting from the field), Kevin McHale had 24 points and 13 rebounds and Robert Parish scored 22 for the Celtics. Bird also handed out seven assists.

Jerry Sichting, filling in for the injured Danny Ainge, did a good job with 14 points. Scott Wedman came off the bench to score the like number. It was the 20th straight time the Celtics beat the Cavs at the Garden, a streak which dates back to October 13, 1978. Boston improved its home record to 15-1.

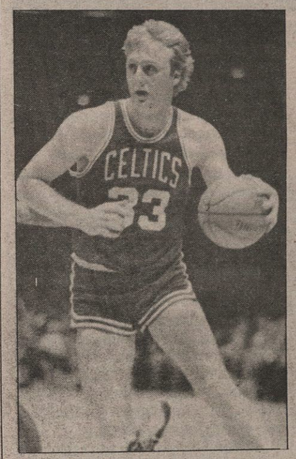
Edgar Jones paced Cleveland with 20 points. Boston College product John Bagley was limited to just three points.

January 10, at Boston
Celtics 115, Atlanta 108

The Hawks have been one of the hottest teams in the NBA in recent weeks, but they were stopped by the Celtics, who improved their home record to 16-1.

Larry Bird had another hot-shooting night, making 12 of 21 shots enroute to a team-high 29 points. Kevin McHale and Dennis Johnson each had 24, and Johnson had eight assists. Robert Parish had 16 points and 15 rebounds.

Dominique Wilkins took scoring honors with 34 points for the Hawks. It was the first time in six games the Hawks had lost.



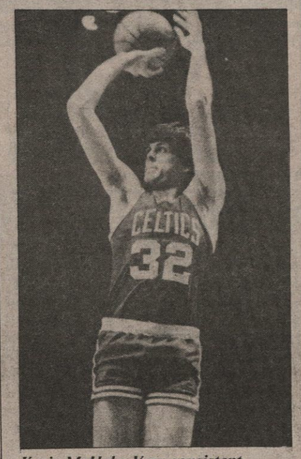
Larry Bird: Making an impact.

January 15, at Boston
Celtics 123, Denver 100

Just call the Celtics 17-1 at home.

A 14-0 outburst in the third quarter enabled the Celts to handle Denver without any trouble. Kevin McHale topped all scorers with 34 points, sinking 14 of 19 shots. Larry Bird turned in another stellar performance, with 24 points (11-16 from the floor and a three-pointer), 14 rebounds and 9 assists. Danny Ainge returned to the lineup and chipped in 16 points. Jerry Sichting had 12.

Alex English led Denver with 22 points, and Bill Hanzlik dropped in 17.



Kevin McHale: Very consistent.

January 17, at Indianapolis
Celtics 123, Indiana 105

Larry Bird fired in three three-point shots, scored 21 points and had nine rebounds, but it was Kevin McHale's night to shine at Market Square Arena. McHale scored 17 of his game-high 28 points in the first half, including six during a streak which put the Celtics ahead to stay.

A hot shooter of late, McHale made 9 of 16 shots from the floor, and all 10 of his free throws. Robert Parish had 20 points for the Celtics and Scott Wedman added 13. Bill Walton came off the bench to tally 12 points.

The Pacers, who lost their seventh straight game, were led by rookie Wayman Tisdale's 20 points. Former Providence star Terence Stansbury had 16.

January 18, at Atlanta
Celtics 125, Atlanta 122

The Hawks were rolling along with a 27-point lead, then they got themselves in trouble. Atlanta players began mouthing off at the Celtics. Duly motivated, the Celtics methodically erased Atlanta's hefty lead and walked away with a win.

"I couldn't beleive they were yapping at us," center Robert Parish said. "They were telling us it was their night."

It turned out to be Larry Bird's night. The forward scored 41 points, 17 of them coming in the third quarter. In that 12 minute interval, the Celtics outscored Atlanta, 32-18 and began to make their move. Boston trailed at the half, 70-48.

Robert Parish had 22 points for the Celts, and Kevin McHale scored 20 and grabbed 13 rebounds. Scott Wedman came off the bench to fire in 21.

Dominique Wilkins slashed through the Boston defense for 36 points. Doc Rivers added 14.

Celtics 126, Cavs 95

CLEVELAND (95)
Hinson 3-6 4-6 10, Turpin 6-9 0-0 12, West 3-7 2-2 8, Bagley 1-5 1-2 3, Free 4-14 2-2 10, Minniefield 6-11 0-3 12, Shelton 3-3 0-0 6, E.Jones 9-10 2-2 20, Davis 3-5 0-0 6, Poquette 1-3 1-1 3, Lee 0-4 5-6 5. Totals 39-78 17-24 95.
BOSTON (126)
McHale 7-12 10-10 24, Bird 11-20 2-2 25, Parish 8-10 6-9 22, D.Johnson 2-7 0-0 4, Sichting 6-9 2-2 14, Vincent 1-9 4-4 6, Kite 0-1 0-0 0, Carlisle 3-4 0-0 6, Wedman 7-10 0-1 14, Thirdkill 3-5 5-9 11. Totals 49-87 29-37 126.

Cleveland	19	26	26	24— 95
Boston	31	33	31	31—126

Three-point goal—Bird. Fouled out—Kite. Rebounds—Cleveland 41 (Turpin 9), Boston 52 (McHale 13). Assists—Cleveland 20 (Minniefield 7), Boston 28 (Bird 7). Total fouls—Cleveland 29, Boston 20. Technical—Cleveland illegal defense. A— 14,890.

Celtics 115, Hawks 108

ATLANTA (108)
Wilkins 17-30 0-4 34, Willis 4-7 0-0 8, Rollins 1-3 0-0 2, Wittman 4-7 0-0 8, Rivers 6-14 6-7 18, Koncak 5-8 2-3 12, Webb 4-11 4-5 12, Levingston 1-2 0-0 2, E.Johnson 0-5 0-0 0, Hastings 4-6 0-0 8, Battle 2-3 0-0 4. Totals 48-94 12-19 108. y
BOSTON (115)
McHale 11-14 2-3 24, Bird 12-21 4-4 29, Parish 8-13 0-2 16, D.Johnson 7-15 9-10 24, Sichting 2-4 1-1 5, Ainge 1-1 0-0 2, Vincent 3-4 2-2 8, Walton 1-2 0-0 2, Wedman 0-3 1-2 1, Carlisle 2-3 0-0 4. Totals 47-80 19-24 115.

Atlanta	34	22	20	32—108
Boston	30	32	33	20—115

Three-point goals—Bird, D.Johnson. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Atlanta 42 (Willis 13), Boston 49 (Parish 15). Assists—Atlanta 18 (Webb 6), Boston 32 (D.Johnson 8). Total fouls—Atlanta 26, Boston 17. Technical—Levingston. A— 14,890.

Celtics 123, Nuggets 100

DENVER (100)
English 10-20 2-2 22, Natt 5-13 0-0 10, Cooper 5-11 0-0 10, Lever 7-16 0-0 14, Dunn 3-7 0-0 6, Schayes 3-7 5-6 11, Hanzlik 6-11 4-6 17, Turner 1-6 0-0 2, Evans 3-9 0-0 6, Rasmussen 0-2 0-0 0, Williams 0-2 0-0 0, White 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 44-105 11-14 100.
BOSTON (123)
McHale 14-19 5-6 33, Bird 11-16 1-1 24, Parish 5-11 3-4 13, Johnson 4-11 1-2 9, Ainge 7-17 2-2 16, Sichting 6-9 0-0 12, Walton 1-4 0-0 2, Carlisle 1-2 0-0 2, Wedman 3-7 0-0 6, Thirdkill 3-4 0-2 6, Kite 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 55-101 12-17 123.

Denver	34	29	15	22—100
Boston	33	30	28	32—123

Three-point goals—Hanzlik, Bird. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Denver 51 (Dunn, Cooper 8), Boston 64 (Bird 16). Assists—Denver 20 (English 7), Boston 41 (Bird 9). Total fouls—Denver 15, Boston 17. Technical—Denver illegal defense. A— 14,890.

Celtics 123, Pacers 105

BOSTON (123)
Bird 8-17 2-2 21, McHale 9-16 10-10 28, Parish 8-13 4-6 20, Ainge 2-8 0-0 4, Johnson 5-11 1-2 11, Sichting 3-4 0-0 6, Walton 5-6 2-2 12, Wedman 6-7 0-0 13, Carlisle 2-3 0-0 4, Kite 0-0 0-0 0, Thirdkill 0-1 2-4 2. Totals 49-88 21-24 123.
INDIANA (105)
Anderson 6-9 0-0 12, Tisdale 9-21 2-2 20, Stipanovich 2-9 0-0 4, Fleming 6-10 3-4 11, Richardson 6-9 4-4 16, Kellogg 7-11 0-0 14, Gray 1-1 2-2 4, Stansbury 7-12 2-3 16, Garnett 2-6 0-0 4, Martin 2-5 0-0 4, McClain 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 46-93 13-15 105.

Boston	32	32	32	27—123
Indiana	22	32	28	23—105

Three-point goals—Bird 3, Wedman. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Boston 41 (Bird 9), Indiana 50 (Stipanovich 13). Assists—Boston 36 (Bird 8), Indiana 28 (Fleming 7). Total fouls—Boston 11, Indiana 24. A—16,904.

Celtics 125, Hawks 122

BOSTON (125)
Bird 15-27 9-11 41, McHale 7-15 6-7 20, Parish 10-15 2-4 22, Ainge 0-3 0-0 0, D.Johnson 4-14 1-2 9, Walton 5-7 0-1 10, Wedman 10-16 0-0 21, Sichting 1-3 0-0 2, Carlisle 0-1 0-0 0, Thirdkill 0-0 0-0 0, Kite 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 52-101 18-25 125.
ATLANTA (122)
Wilkins 13-24 9-11 36, Willis 6-11 0-0 12, Rollins 2-6 1-1 5, Rivers 6-13 2-4 14, Wittman 3-13 0-0 10, Koncak 2-6 1-2 5, Carr 2-4 0-0 4, E.Johnson 5-9 3-6 13, Levingston 6-7 3-3 15, Webb 2-4 4-4 8, Battle 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 49-97 23-31 122.

Boston	25	23	32	32—125
Atlanta	34	36	18	24—122

Three-point goals—Bird 2, Wedman, Wilkins. Fouled out—McHale. Rebounds—Boston 64 (McHale 12), Atlanta 48 (Koncak 10). Assists—Boston 37 (Ainge 12), Atlanta 30 (E.Johnson 9). Total fouls—Boston 31, Atlanta 25. A—16,522.

Eddie Gillooly

Overlooked

K.C. Jones of the Celtics and Pat Riley of the Lakers will be the coaches in the 36th NBA All-Star Game at Reunion Arena in Dallas, February 9 but that'll be the only recognition the pair will receive for their outstanding achievements as coaches.

When the media votes for the "Coach of the Year" honors at the end of the season, you can be sure both Jones and Riley will be overlooked once again with the award given to some coach who lifted his team a notch or two in the standings.

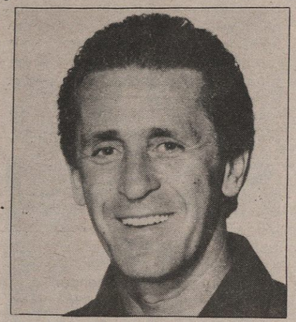
Entering this season, Jones compiled a 280-130 record in five seasons as head coach (three with the Bullets and two with the Celtics). The Bullets won two division titles and finished second the other year, with K.C. at the helm. The Celtics won two consecutive titles.

In his four seasons with the Lakers, Riley has posted a 224-93 mark and has been in the Championship series all four years, winning two titles. Riley has a 49-20 playoff record while Jones' mark is 42-33.

Once again this year, the Celtics and Lakers are far ahead of the field in their respective conferences but already you can sense that the coaching feats of Jones and Riley are taken for granted. Neither seems to be able to achieve the respect they deserve.

Even though the Celtics and Lakers have dominated the NBA for years, the "Coach of the Year" award has been somewhat elusive for both teams. Red Auerbach, Tom Heinsohn and Bill Fitch were named once. Fitch also received the distinction as coach of the Cleveland Cavaliers.

The only Lakers coach to win the award since it was established in the 1962-63 was Bill Sharman in 1971-72 when the Lakers won the title with Wilt Chamberlain, Elgin Baylor and Jerry West. K.C. Jones was Sharman's assistant that season.



Pat Riley: Overlooked.

Another coach who was wrongly overlooked by the media each year was Billy Cunningham who compiled a 454-196 record in his eight seasons with the Philadelphia Sixers. Like Jones and Riley, Cunningham's teams were EXPECTED to win.

The fallacy of the vote for "Coach of the Year" is that the media EXPECTS the Celtics, Lakers and the Sixers to win 55 or 60 games each year and that the coach is merely along for the ride.

In reality, Jones and Riley have the toughest coaching jobs in the NBA. Their teams possess the quality talent and it is their responsibility to make sure that all the parts function smoothly and that the members of the team do not become complacent.

Jones is not a self promoter but the players will let you know every now and then that it was K.C.'s game plan or bench strategy that enabled them to overpower the opposition or stage a come-from-behind victory.

Following the Lakers victory over the Celtics for the NBA title, Larry Bird said, "Pat Riley employed excellent strategy. He made more adjustments than I've seen anyone make. His coaching was unbelieveable."

The key to the success of both teams is that neither Jones nor Riley overcoaches. They work to their team's strength and take advantage of every mismatch and weakness offered by the opposition. When their teams get out of synch, they recognize the problem and correct it.

It is ironic that Jones and Riley have been at the top of the class with their teams the past few years. Both played nine seasons in the NBA and had to work extremely hard to maintain their status. Both were aggressive and competitive.

It is this same aggressiveness and competitiveness that enables them to achieve success as coaches. For the opposition, every game against the Celtics or the Lakers is like a playoff tilt. The opposition is always sky-high seeking to prove themselves with an upset.

As a result, there is no time during the 82-game season that either the Celtics or Lakers can coast. If the Celtics or Lakers ease up they know they will suffer embarrassment at game's end.

A proven fact, particularly this season, is that almost every team that has been able to notch a victory over the Celtics has suffered a losing streak of two or three games following the win over the Celtics. They spend too much time savoring the win.

Jones has the Celtics enroute to another 60 win season--his third straight---but the skeptics are still out there. After the Celtics loss to the Knicks on Christmas Day, the talk show hosts and callers couldn't wait to criticize his substitutions and timeouts during the contest.

Instead of writing off the game as a rare case of the blahs, it was K.C., not the team that was at fault. When the Celtics click off one victory after another, no one ever mentions the coaching techniques devised by Jones and his staff.

K.C. and Riley never get credit for the 60 wins. Only criticism for the 25 or so losses. Some of the voting media might only see Jones and Riley twice during a season and have no idea of the imput these two coaches have in the success of their teams.

I remember the 1977-78 season when the majority of the media was enamored by self-promoter Hubie Brown and voted him coach of the year because he took an Atlanta Hawks team and posted a 31-51 record the previous season to a 41-41 record.

As I recall, Hubie received all but two votes that year for the award. One of those votes was mine and it went to Lennie Wilkins who had taken over the Seattle Supersonics following a 4-17 record and coached them to the championship finals where they lost to the Washington Bullets.

Despite the horrendous start, the Sonics finished the regular season with a 47-35 record compared to a 40-42 mark the previous year. Wilkens record that season was actually 43-18 and yet he received only two votes.

Wilkens' Sonics won the Pacific Division title the next year with a 52-30 record and went on to win the NBA title, defeating the Bullets. But once again Wilkens was snubbed. This time the media opted for Cotton Fitzsimmons who coached the Kansas City Kings to the Midwest title with a 48-34 record. The Kings were 31-51 the previous season.

No matter what happens. Jones and Riley get my vote. They deserve at least to share the Coach of the Year award. Like Rodney Dangerfield they get no respect.

Great Moments - On the Air!

"Boston Celtics Great Moments," a series of 25 thirty-second vignettes, are now being aired on WCVB-TV, Channel 5. The series points up the Celtics enviable record since 1951, featuring clips from 15 World Championship contests and memorable games with such Celtics greats as Bob Cousy, Tom Heinsohn, Bill Russell, John Havlicek, Dave Cowens and Larry Bird.

"This Great Moments series compliments our long-standing relationship with the Celtics since 1980," said Barry M. Allen, First Vice President, Bank of Boston. "There's no doubt in our minds that sports association strengthens our marketing efforts in New England."

Don Sperling, executive producer of NBA Entertainment, which prepared the "Celtics Great Moments," said, "It was a tough assignment. The Celtics have an aura unmatched by any other team. Some clips are in black and white which reinforces the historical aspect. We have captured the mystique of the Boston Garden -- the banners in the rafters, the closeness of the fans to the action on the floor. Winning is the name of the game, and no team has done it as well as the Celtics."

Bank of Boston has also been associated with the PGA golf tournament at Pleasant Valley in Sutton since 1981 and, in the Boston area, sponsors the "Shoot Straight" basketball program for inner-city youth, coordinated by Mike Jarvis, Boston University basketball coach.

A Special Experience

Celtics Video Yearbook

By Angela Blinn

Lights, camera, action! Celts General Manager Jan Volk has inked a deal on a Boston Celtics mini-movie. The mini-movie will run approximately one hour in length and be entitled, Boston Celtics Video Yearbook, 1985-1986.

The Yearbook will feature an exclusive, indepth look at the Boston Celtics Family. Purchasers of the cassette will be treated to a never before, behind the scenes look at the Celtics and their organization. What goes on in the locker room, before, at halftime and after the game? How about the Celtics wives, children -- who are they, how do they spend their time while their men in green endure the grueling pace of professional basketball? What about the organization behind the team and the hundreds of people that earn their living on the number one basketball franchise in the world? The Celtics Video Yearbook is an entire season compressed into an hour -- sentiments echoed by thousands about how they feel about these men in green and the ledgend they represent.

Larry Babb (L) and Joe Masiello (far R) get "behind the scenes with K.C. and Jimmy Rogers.

A never before, behind the scenes look at the Celtics...

The Yearbook is a first for the Celtics and the production assigned to Larry Babb, President of Video Sports Network and Joe Masiello President of National Video Network. Masiello and Babb have a number of credits between them including: the making of a feature film, scores of commercials, Video Yearbooks on Boston College, University of Texas and the University of California. They have also written screenplays, novels, and recently aired fifteen shows on Channel 5, entitled Eagles Preview. Masiello and Babb have a host of other credits and are most enthusiastic about the forth coming Boston Celtics Video Yearbook.

The two have already begun filming The Yearbook and described the Celts players, coaches, management and office personnel as, "first class people who have been extremely accomodating and eager to lend assistance whenever asked. Babb related, "We've had an opportunity to visit with the players and a number of people within the Celts organization...they are all, without exception extremely hard working people and totally without pretense." Masiello concurred: "Frankly in watching the Celts over many years I enjoyed them tremendously and marveled at their degree of professionalism and skill. I really had not given much thought to what it took to reach that degree of skill -- or what a tremendous effort is effected behind the scenes to make this organization run so smoothly--and now to bare witness to this franchise of excellence is truly a very special experience."

The Boston Celtics Video Yearbook will be ready for consumer purchase on VHS or BETA format fifteen days from the last game of the season. Cost for the Yearbook will be $49.95 and may be ordered thru National Video Network, 329-6788.

K.C. & Company in the Works

Babb and Masiello are also producing the television pilot, K.C. & COMPANY. K.C. & COMPANY will air January 30th, 8 p.m. on Channel 56 prior to the Celtics, Chicago game.

The show centered around K.C. Jones, with co-hosts, multi-talented Dan Davis, the well known WRKO Sports Director, and Jan Fox a lady known as one of the best talents in the business and currently a co-news anchor on Channel 6 in Maine. Lee Babb a veteran production manager whose work is well recognized throughout the industry in such projects as, "Why Eagles Soar", "The University of Texas" film, "They Know Us Now" and the local hit sports show of the year, "Eagles Preview", is slated as production mahager for the program.

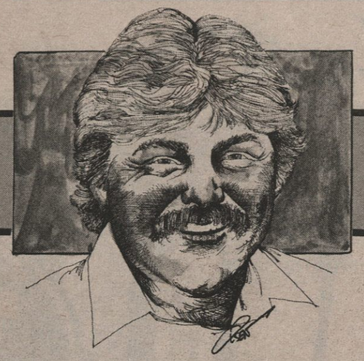
According to Masiello, K.C. & COMPANY will seek a much broader based audience than that of a regular sports show. It will not be the typical "Coach's Corner "--i.e., What went wrong tonight coach?" Or "How do things shape up for the big game?" "While it will contain a fair amount of basketball action the format," states Masiello, "is unique in that it is really a sports entertainment show. We'll be featuring many of the people involved with the Celts that the ordinary fan never sees. Footage not seen elsewhere, out-takes, special splicing and insightful glimpses into the Celtics as a team will be the rule, rather than the exception in the show. This is going to be a fun show, and we look forward to a good deal of participation from the Celtics family as a whole."

Babb, who has spent more than twenty years in producing major projects within the industry is a bundle of veiled energy--a man whose next project is but a thought away and seemingly ready to be packaged and produced within a flick of an eye, stated "K.C. & Company will be taped at various locations and frequently, Celtics players will be highlighted with personal appearances. Our plans include incorporating well known New England personalities who are otherwise not associated with the Celtics, and have their cameo appearance related to the Celtics organization and the tradition they represent."

When asked how the association with the Boston Celtics came about, Babb asserted, "We began speaking to the Celtics organization nearly two year ago--we talked show...movie... yearbook--whatever it took to be involved with this franchise we were prepared to undertake. Slowly the deal began to evolve...first the Celtics Yearbook, then we discussed with K.C. the possibility of doing a show around him. Of course like anything worth while it takes a lot of hard work and creative people to attain a successful result. We feel as though we have some of the finest people in the industry involved in the Yearbook and K.C. & Company right down to the camera crew headed up by an extremely competent man by the name of Guy DeFise. The production house we chose, Videocom of Dedham, is one of the best in New England -- we went first class all the way...a first class production team... for a first class organization, the Boston Celtics."

K.C. & COMPANY, although being introduced as a Special on Channel 56, it is seriously being looked at as a weekly show.

Listening to Babb and Masiello and the enthusiasm they display, along with their record of achievement, one gets the distinct impression the Boston Celtics have added yet another winning dimension to this already incredibly successful franchise.



Glenn Ordway

Who voted for Tripucka?

We're quickly approaching the midway mark of the NBA season and it's time to reflect on some first half observations. Lets start with the quarter million fans who voted for Kelly Tripucka on the East All-Star team...they should be gagged, tied and forced to watch twenty four hours of video tape featuring Kelly's play at the defensive end. And with that I submit my entries:

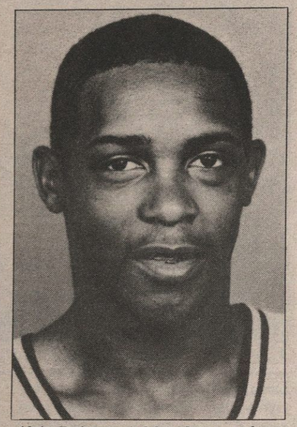
EAST
F - Larry Bird
F - Kevin McHale
C - Moses Malone
G - Isiah Thomas
G - Mo Cheeks

WEST
F - Alex English
F - Adrian Dantley
C - Akeem Olajuwon
G - Magic Johnson
G - Alvin Robertson

Polaroid Fan of the Month Mrs. John P. Rattigan and her daughter with Celtics Tod Rosensweig, Jack Pacheco of Polaroid and Peter Latsky of Claus Gelotte.

Polaroid Fan of the Month

IN attendance at the Boston Garden for the game between the Celtics and the Denver Nuggets on Wednesday, January 15th was the latest winner of the Polaroid/Boston Celtics Fan of the Month contest -- Mrs. John P. Rattigan of Newton. As a winner of the Fan of the Month Contest, Mrs. Rattigan received two tickets to the game, a night at the Embassy Suites Hotel, in Boston, limousine transportation to and from the game, courtesy of Boston Livery Service, an official Celtics Starter jacket, an autographed team basketball and a Polaroid Sun 660 Autofocus camera with film. You can enter the Boston Celtics/Polaroid Fan of the Month contest at any Clause Gelotte store and get the royal treatment from Polaroid, the official instant camera of the Boston Celtics.



Alvin Robertson: Most Improved.

Mo Cheeks remains in the eyes of the fans one of the most underated players in the league. Not so with the players and coaches. They guys who must play opposite him night in and night out, appreciate his phenominal skills. Had Micheal Ray Richarson remained clean, he would have to be considered as a possible starter. Runnerups Buck Williams, Dominique Wilkins, Orlando Woolridge, Sidney Moncrief, Dennis Johnson and Robert Parish. Though Parish's play may have tailed off lately, its impossible to ignore his great play in the first two months. It's also hard to eliminate Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's name from the west starting lineup, but Akeem Olajuwon has not only established himself as the league's premier offensive rebounder but he is outscoring Kareem as well. Other West team runner-ups include Purvis Short, Ralph Sampson, Calvin Natt, Mark Aguirre, John Lucas.

MOST IMPROVED TEAM
(Tie) Atlanta, San Antonio

The Hawks have reared their heads as contenders for the Central Division crown. Three factors seem to have made the difference (1) the emergence of a more complete offensive Dominique Wilkins...now he looks to dish off as well as shoot. (2) A steady influence at the controls in Doc Rivers and (3) Size and depth in the frontline. San Antonio's improvement follows on the heels of a trade that sent their most prized player of the past to Chicago. It is not a coincidence. George Gervin's exit not only created a happier atmosphere for the Spurs but it allowed Alvin Robertson to emerge as a legitimate star.

MOST DISAPPOINTING TEAM
Detriot

Here's a team that took the Celtics to six games in a grueling Eastern Conference Semi-final. This year they were the media consensus pick to win the Central Division crown, but Noooo! The Pistons are third in the league in total offense averaging 115.2 points per game. Their troubles are located at the other end of the court where they give up 116.3 nightly. That places them number one in the NBA's negative points catagory. The acquisition of Ricky Mahorn was expected to remedy that problem...It didn't.

MOST IMPROVED PLAYER
Alvin Robertson

He leads the league in steals...Is averaging over 17 points per game... 2nd on his team in rebounds and assists...shooting 54% from the field...84% from the line and he has 30 more steals than turnovers. In essence, he's the new Micheal Ray Richardson.

Fred Walker Winner of Lite/WLVI Sweepstakes

Fred Waker, a 57-year-old retired postal employee from Beverly, Mass. had his name picked out of a drum on television on saturday night, January 8th. As a result, he'll be attending the National Basketball Association All-Star Game in Dallas, Texas on February 9th.

Walker was named the winner of the Lite Beer/WLVI-TV All-Star Sweepstakes, a contest he entered in the course of filling out an All-Star ballot at the Boston Garden. A long-time Celtics season ticket holder, his name was drawn on that fateful Saturday night by Lite Beer celebrities Bob Lanier and former Celtics great Dave Cowens.

As the award for his selection as the sweepstakes winner, he will receive the following: an all-expenses-paid trip to Dallas, including air fare and three nights at a Dallas hotel; 2 tickets to Lite Beer's opening night reception, the big banquet the night before the All-Star Game and the game itself; and $250.00 in cash for spending money.

Knight blasts Pacers on the release of Buckner.

By Tony Cooper

The other day, the Indiana Pacers placed injured forward Clark Kellogg back on their active roster, a move which necessitated them dropping a player to reach the 12-player limit. Former Celtics guard Quinn Buckner was deleted to make room for Kellogg.

To most people, this is just another one of the multitudes of insignificant transactions that can be found in the agate section of any sports page. But not to Indiana Hoosier basketball coach Bob Knight.

Knight, Buckner's coach when the 6-3 Buckner played at Indiana, is quite familiar with Buckner's attributes, both on and off the floor. And when the sometimes-irascible Knight found out Buckner is now unemployed, he was outraged.

"It's really too bad to have a professional team in Indiana handled as poorly as this team is," Knight said.

Buckner was in Bloomington the same day he was waived. He sat next to Knight on the Hoosier bench and watched his alma mater defeat Ohio State, 69-66, in a Big 10 game.

"Buckner was a big part in our winning the game," Knight said. "He was in the lockerroom talking to the kids about strategy and how to play. His contributions are unbelievable. He contributes a lot to any team who has people who understand the game."

Buckner was acquired from the Celtics last summer. In 32 games with the Pacers this season, he averaged 3.7 points a game in sporadic action. With the Celtics a year ago, Buckner averaged just 2.4 points a night and shot only .383 from the floor and .640 from the foul line.

In all fairness, it has to be said that Buckner's career had been on a downward trend the last few years. He was the seventh overall pick in the 1976 draft, by the Milwaukee Bucks. Buckner was considered a poor shooter, but his passing, defense and exceptional attitude made him valuable chattel. He was a four-time selection to the NBA All-Defensive second team.

The 31-year-old Buckner had six productive years with the Bucks, before being traded to the Celtics for Dave Cowens, prior to the start of the 1982-83 season. From that point on, Buckner's playing time and productivity dropped immensely. However, he was a member of Boston's 1984 NBA Championship team.

When the Pacers picked up Buckner, he was hoped to provide a steadying influence on Indiana's young players such as Steve Stipanovich, Herb Williams, Terence Stansbury, Wayman Tisdale, and Kellogg.

Quinn Buckner: Job hunting.

"He did that," Pacer Coach George Irvine said. "But the biggest drawback to having Quinn on the team is outside shooting isn't his forte. And shooting is our biggest weakness."

True, Buckner's outside shooting is almost laughable--it has been said that he couldn't sink a bowling ball in the Atlantic Ocean during high tide. However, Buckner has plenty of qualities not found in many guards in the league--or other players, for that matter. And he has long been considered one of the NBA's classiest acts.

"A few of the Boston players have told me how valuable Buckner was to the team," Knight said. "The Pacers just don't know enough about basketball to know how to use him.

"It's a shame for a state as strong in basketball as Indiana to have a team run by people who don't know what they're doing. The only one who does is (consultant and one-time Celtic) Wayne Embry. What they should do is turn the whole operation over to him. Then maybe something would get done."

What does Buckner have to say about the whole ordeal? Actually, not a heckuva whole lot. He refused to knock the Pacers, which is befitting to his gracious manner.

"I'm sure the Pacers felt they were doing what was best for the franchise. All you can ask for anyone is that they do their best.

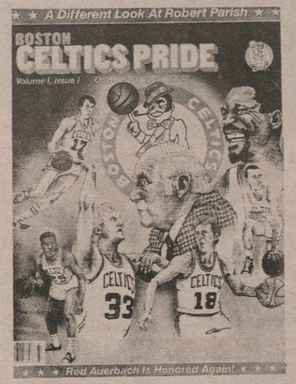
"It wouldn't be fair for me to criticize the Pacers. Not much would be accomplished by doing that. I have some feelings, of course, but not much would be gained by letting them out now."

But Knight was more than happy to hurl the invective at the Pacers. If there's one thing to be said about Knight, despite his less-than-endearing demeanor, he does stand up for his players, past and present.

Said Embry, reacting to Knight's statements: "It wouldn't be smart to say anything about them. To get into a shouting match with Coach Knight wouldn't be good. What's important to realize here is this is an emotional issue and Knight is acting out of emotion."

And Buckner is without a job, at least for now. One would have to think--and hope--that there's room for him in the NBA somewhere.

BE A CELTICS EXPERT!



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Basketball Times — College Insight

By Larry Donald

Finalist in the **Delray Brooks** Sweepstakes, Part II, is Providence over North Carolina State. Brooks, who dropped out of school at Indiana, was in attendance for PC's double overtime loss to Villanova in Providence. He heard the students chanting his name and that had to mean something to this young man who arrived at IU after a stellar schoolboy career at Michigan City, Indiana. But once in the Hoosier camp of **Bobby Knight** it became an all-too-familiar story. Brooks never adjusted to the system and as a result saw only moderate playing time. Eventually he decided this wasn't the place to be...

And will there be any long term ramifications for Indiana when the next great player comes out of the Hoosier state? Well, some will point out that Brooks and **Troy Lewis** were co-Mr. Basketball honorees in Indiana and while the former had a disillusioning experience in Bloomington, the later has continued to show great improvement at Purdue and figures to be one of the school's star performers during the next two seasons. Keep an eye on that situation...

The vote at Michigan went eight to six in favor of the traditional white sneaker over the multi-color space age basketball shoe. However, among the starters the vote was four to one for the more colorful shoe. I thought you'd be interested...The Big East should hire **Joan Rivers** to tell Georgetown's **Reggie Williams** to grow up. Every game it's a fight or a pointing, shouting match with this kid ...Heading into Missouri Valley Conference play Bradley led the league in offensive average at 77.3 ppg. The Braves were eighth, however, in defensive average at 68.4 ppg. But that apparently won't matter since the second best offensive average in the league (owned by Tulsa) was 68.3 ppg. Make Bradley the favorite to win the title...

When Weber State coach **Larry Farmer** arrived to begin his new job he quipped, "When you see a black man driving a Mercedes in Ogden, that'll be me." Later in the fall someone asked him about the Mercedes and he laughed, "Yeah, but it looks just like a Buick." Once into the season, though, a group of Weber State boosters, apparently enchanted with the team's 7-0 start, banded together and purchased a new, $31,000 Mercedes and presented it to Farmer just before the Wildcats game with Utah State. And that's a true story...

What separates Syracuse from the rest of the Big East is 6-11 pivot **Rony Seikaly.** There's just no one who can contain him and defensively he's proven a disruptive force...Incidentally **Rafael Addison's** dropoff in scoring production can be traced to his increased playing time at the big guard slot...Another name to keep in mind for the vacant coaching job at Pitt is New York Knicks' assistant **Bob Hill.** Formerly an assistant at Pitt under **Tim Grgurich** and later an aide to **Larry Brown** at Kansas, Hill is a viable candidate....

Yes, I realize that **William Bedford's** one of the nation's best centers and that **Andre Turner's** playing like an All-American point guard and that **Baskerville Holmes,** in his quiet manner, is an effective forward, but what makes Memphis State a legit top five team is swingman **William Askew.** This guy is the complete package...And don't fret too much for Illinois even though coach **Lou Henson** has watched two top guards, **Doug Altenberger** and **Tony Wysinger,** go down. That's open the door for sophomore **Glynn Blackwell** who'll probably be the team's top point producer by NCAA tournament time. He's a talent who now has an opportunity. This Illini club will be heard from in March...

If you asked me to name the three leading contenders for college basketball's Player of the Year award at the season's halfway point, I'd say Michigan's **Roy Tarpley,** St. John's **Walter Berry** and Indiana's **Steve Alford...**The finest player you've not heard about may be St. Joseph's guard **Mo Martin.** He'll probably be among the first three guards taken in the NBA draft...Privately Kansas coach **Larry Brown** remains concerned about **Danny Manning's** lack of assertiveness, but some of the media covering the Jayhawks say the coach's emphasis on "senior leadership" may be a big contributing factor in Manning's reluctance to take over....

The McDonald's All Star basketball game, featuring the nation's top schoolboy players, will be played April 11 in Detroit's Joe Louis Arena...

We talk a good deal about stability in the world of college basketball (or the lack of it), but how about the 17-year run of my friend **Joe Dean** as a color analyst for the Southeastern Conference. It that's not a record, it should be....

Next time you are patched through to ESPN's "Dial Dick Vitale" ask him about the time he instructed his University of Detroit assistant coach **Smokey Gaines** to find him a home game that was an "absolute" win. And Smokey found the boss a good one, little Illinois Wesleyan... yep the one with big Jack Sikma....As I watch this season unfold I'm more inclined to think **Billy Packer** may have something when he suggested that any shot which goes in the basket (whether an offensive foul or blocking foul is called) ought to count. Make it simple...

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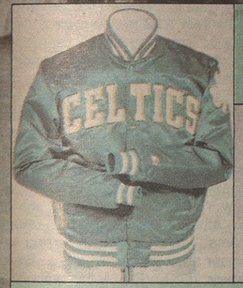

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NBA Notebook

By Terry Lyons

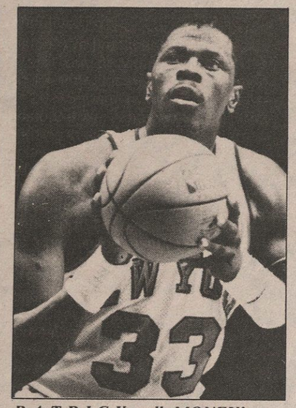
Houston's **Akeem Olajuwon** has become one of the most effective offensive rebounders in the league according to some of his peers. "He's, by far, the best offensive rebounder in the league," said **Mark Eaton** of Utah. "If you're not aggressive against him, it's 40 points and 20 rebounds." Perennial offensive rebound king **Moses Malone** of Philadelphia agrees. "The guy's a winner. He's just coming into his prime," says Malone. "A little more time and he'll be taking the league apart."... A recent "people page" article in the Detroit News featured Pistons center **Bill Laimbeer's** wife, **Chris,** who was asked just about everything related to being the wife of a 6-foot-11 NBA star. "I cheer and swear with everyone else," said Mrs. Laimbeer. "I sit there and hear people scream obscenities about Bill. If they really are persistent, I'll tell them to take a hike." ... Can it actually be possible that the LA Lakers might be a better team today than they were when they won the 1985 NBA title? "We're further along," said forward **Mitch Kupchak.** "Even though the first unit is a year older, in our case it's a plus. **Maurice Lucas** offsets **Bob McAdoo,** and then there's the surprise **A.C. Green.**"... Nets center **Darryl Dawkins** is working with the local Public Service Electric and Gas Company on a project to insure needy New Jersey residents of power and heat through the cold winter months ... Of course the 1986 NBA All-Star Game is just a couple weeks away, but the date for the **1987 All-Star Game** was recently determined. The 37th game will be played in Seattle at the Kingdome on Sunday, February 8, 1987. The establishment of the exact date followed the late-December agreement between the NBA and CBS Sports, extending the network's exclusive broadcast rights to NBA games for four years from the 1986-87 season through 1989-90. The All-Star Game is featured each year as part of CBS's regular-season NBA coverage. The 1987 event will mark the second time the NBA All-Star Game will be played in Seattle. The previous game was in 1974.

* * * * *

Two new books from NBA-related sources are on the shelves of America's bookstores. Look for New York Knicks broadcaster **Butch Beard's** recently published *"Butch Beard's Basic Basketball."* It's full of the fundamental information every hoops player should learn. Also, something's cooking in LA and that's the new cookbook the Lakers players, coaches, staff and celebrity fans have published, with the proceeds benefitting Forum Community Services. *"Lakers Are Cookin' "*is available for $17.50 by writing the LA Forum ... **Elvin Hayes,** a former NBA star who will compete in the Schick NBA Legends Classic on February 8 at Reunion Arena in Dallas, is stressing the importance of a college education to all student-athletes. Hayes returned to the University of Houston to earn his degree and said it will "provide balance in life." He hoped his decision might set an example for others ... The 76ers have taken to the strategic decision of playing All-Star forward **Julius Erving** at the shooting guard spot for at least part of the game. The decision helped the Sixers get on track during late December and early January as they won 10 games of 11. "Playing guard is less wear and tear on him," said Philadelphia GM **Pat Williams.** "It could lengthen his career. It also gives us more rebounding, and Doc more of an opportunity to run because he's closer to the basket."

* * * * *

Chuck Nevitt, the 7-5 reserve center of the Detroit Pistons, lost the distinction of being the all-time tallest NBA player when Washington's **Manute Bol** entered the league. Nevitt, a former Laker reserve, has not lost his determination to stay in the NBA. "Can you believe him," asked Atlanta guard **Randy Wittman?** "In the summer leagues a few years ago, Chuck was so bad he couldn't get into the games. You can tell he worked against **Kareem** (Abdul-Jabbar) ... Nevitt also provided some help to the Pistons off the court. It seems a TV microphone, usually taped to the blackboard, came loose during a Piston game. Nevitt reached up and re-taped the mike while arena attendants searched for a stepladder... **Reggie Theus** has "been playing the best ball of his life--in a system and under control," according to Kings GM Joe Axelson. ... **Larry Drew,** Theus' usual backcourtmate, returned to the lineup Jan. 14 after missing six games because of a prostate infection ... Houston forward **Ralph Sampson** is hoping some good will come form his personal early season slump. "It's an uncomfortable feeling being "booed" by your own fans," said Sampson. "You talk to teammates, you talk to your friends and you try to get through it. I can't sit here right now and know what good is going to come out of this time. Hopefully, it will make me a better person. I know this can't just all have been for nothing." ... **Tony Campbell** of the Detroit Pistons is hoping his high school and



P-A-T-R-I-C-K spells MONEY!

collegiate careers mirror his NBA career, which is now in its second season. "My first few years in college exemplify my first years in the NBA. I played 35 minutes my entire freshman year. I got a few more minutes my sophomore year and I was a starter the last two. The same thing happened in high school. A year ago I was feeling my way around, learning and taking my lumps. This year I've had the opportunity to play a little more. It would be great if the rest goes along the same way."

* * * * *

Harry Weltman, Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Cleveland Cavaliers, was recently voted the 1985 "Pride of Cleveland" award, given each year by the Sports Media Association of Cleveland and Ohio ... In the previous NBA Notebook, a note states that Portland's **Terry Porter** was the only first-rounder paying off a college loan. (His alma mater, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, did not award athletic scholarships). Add Utah Jazz forward **Karl Malone** to that list! Malone, the 13th overall selection in last June's NBA Draft, was not eligible to play or receive an athletic scholarship during his first year at Louisiana Tech, since his grade point average was below 2.0. The 6-9 power forward endured, taking out a 2,500 student loan for his freshman year. He hit the books before hitting the boards and went on to become an NBA first-round draft choice. When he signed his contract with the Jazz, Malone's first priority was to pay back that student loan ... **Larry Bird,** the NBA's Most Valuable Player the last two seasons, also led the league in combined points, rebounds and assists during those two years. Denver's **Alex English** accomplished the feat in 1983 and Philadelphia's **Moses Malone,** then with the Houston Rockets, won the combined title each of the four seasons before that ... San Antonio Spurs Coach **Cotton Fitzsimmons** assures guard **Jon Sundvold:** "There's a place for guys like you in this league. You just have to find the right situation on the right team. He's doing a fine job," said Fitzsimmons. "He's doing the things we felt he could do for us." And what exactly is that? "When I got to San Antonio, they said, 'Hey you're a shooter. That's what we want you to do.' For me, basketball is fun again." said Sundvold.

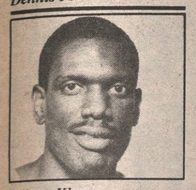
* * * * *

Portland's **Clyde Drexler** won the starting job at off guard earlier this season but recently returned to a reserve role, volunteering to make the switch. "I think it's a good move for the team," said Drexler. "I think I've had more experience coming off the bench than **Jim Paxson** or **Kiki Vandeweghe.** Kiki and Pax had a little more trouble adjusting to it (reserve role) than I do. We need Kiki's offense and Pax is playing very well right now." ... Knicks rookie center **Patrick Ewing** was the subject of a recent report which stated that Georgetown University profited by more than $12 million during his four year at the school. The report listed boosts in attendance at games, increased television revenue, increased admissions applications and general fund-raising contributions among the factors contributing to the extra profits ... Utah GM/Coach **Frank Layden** recalled the crosstown prep rival Boys High in New York: "Great teachers, wonderful athletic program but strange proms," said Layden, referring to its former all-boys enrollment ... **Ed Pinckney,** the MVP of Villanova's NCAA championship club, is having a little trouble adjusting the the NBA. "This is a totally different game than college," said Pinckney, who's seeing limited time with the Phoenix Suns. "It's much quicker and faster paced. You have to learn how to handle different players. The players are everything I thought they'd be." ... In his first few days as Vice President and General Manager of the New York Knickerbockers, **Scotty Stirling** met with the club's coaches, team doctor and players. When he met the team, Stirling said the atmosphere was imformal. "Basically, I just told them, 'Here I am.' **Rory Sparrow** said the guys don't pay much attention to management changes and **Patrick Ewing** said he wanted his $1,500 fine back," said Stirling, referring to the money he fined Ewing for a preseason altercation with Indiana's **Steve Stipanovich.**

Roundball Spoken Here

Dennis Johnson

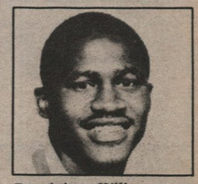
Dennis Johnson, Celtics veteran Guard, commenting on the Celtics' mid-December slump: "Can you call it a slump? I don't know. I do know it was about time we played better. But you can't play to the best of your ability every night. The thing is with our team, on the nights some guys aren't up to par, others usually chip in."



Albert King

Albert King, Nets Forward, on his strategy when playing against Bird: "Well, he's 6-9 and does everything on offense. So I just try and make him work harder on the defensive end."

Dominique Wilkins, Hawks All-Star Forward, praising Larry Bird after the Celtics defeated the rising Hawks team, 115-108, January 10: "When you're playing against a guy like Larry Bird, who is so competitive, you have to be ready to play the game the same way or you'll be embarrassed."



Dominique Wilkens

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Laker great, recalled the 1983-84 Celtics victory over the Lakers in the championship finals, in **Giant Steps,** Abdul-Jabbar's autobiography: "Unfortunately, the NBA season ended in a dud. The Lakers lost in the playoffs to the Boston Celtics. Now I know what my man Popeye Doyle in the **French Connection** felt like. He went through a whole lot of tough hard work, busted up a big heroin ring, confiscated dope by the pound, and in the end the bad guy got away."

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

By The Numbers --- January 2nd through January 15th

Danny Ainge. As the team began a difficult playing stretch, Ainge appeared fully recovered from his sprained left ankle, suffered January 2nd in Indiana. Jones worked him back gradually after Ainge missed two complete games---against New Jersey January 3rd and Cleveland January 8th. He attemped to play in the January 7th action against Detroit and had to retire after 17 minutes. He played 9 minutes against Atlanta; returned to the starting lineup January 15th against Denver with 16-points, 7-assist, 6-rebound effort.

Larry Bird. Perennial All-Star's total game is back. For Example: 27-point, 13-rebound, 8-assist, 4-steal game against Pacers and the following night 29-point, 10-rebound, 8-steal, 4-assists, 1-block versus the Nets. Played 38.3 minutes in 6-games, averaged 26.7 ppg, shooting .554. Team's leading rebounder with 9.3 and 7.1 assists. Concluded stretch with 24-point (11-16 FG), 14-rebound, 9-assist, 2-steal game in an important win over Denver.

Rick Carlisle. Shooting touch is there in the very difficult spot-role. Shot .692 on 9-13 shooting in 6 games. Averaged 8.8 minutes per game and registered 9 assists...Longest playing stint was against Cavs---21 minutes and 6-point, 4-assist game. His most important contribution: his play against Denver when Green Team outplayed a very good Denver bench: 12 minutes, 2-points, 4-assists, 2-rebounds.

Dennis Johnson. Johnson continues to play total game. Averaged 33.8 minutes. Scored 29 on 14-20 shooting from field against Indiana and notched 5-steals. The next night he defeated a Nets' running game challenge by taking Otis Birdsong out of the game: 24 points, 8-assists, 3-steals vs. the Nets.

Greg Kite. Struggling. Averaged 7.1 minutes and grabbed 4-rebounds. His best effort came January 7th against Detroit after Parish was ejected and Walton injured: 8 minutes, 2 blocked shots.

Kevin McHale. Legitimate MVP contender. Tied Bird with 26.7 ppg output over 6 games. 23-points, 6-rebounds, 6-assists vs. Nets; 29-points, 6-rebound, 6-assist game vs. Nets; 24-point, 7-rebound, 3-assist game against Hawks; capped sterling week with 32-point (14-19 FG), 7-rebound, 5-assist game against Denver. Averaged 37.5 minutes, had 7 blocks, and as evidence of his growing court awareness, averaged 4.1 assists.

Robert Parish. Parish's statistics are down but for reasons: ejected at Detroit after (another) fight with Laimbeer; injured back against Nets, January 3rd; stomach cramps in Denver game January 15th. Still averaged 31 minutes and led team with (total) 10 blocked shots. Averaged 14.1 ppg and shot .594. Top effort: 15-point, 16-rebound, 3-block vs. Hawks team, which had won 7-straight, January 10th.

Jerry Sichting. "Finally at home," according to Coach Jones. Shot 26-for-40 (.650). Started the Nets and Cavs game and logged significant minutes against Detroit and Indiana when Ainge was hurt. Shot 6-for-9 against Cleveland in 126-95 win; again shot 6-for-9 with 4 assists in 123-100 win over Denver. Season-high 4-steals in Cleveland game. Top game was 17-point, 6-assist game in 129-117 win over Nets.

David Thirdkill. Third is finally finding his Pre-Season form when he barely missed making the team. Despite spraining right ankle, he played strong against Cleveland: 11-points, 5-rebounds, 1-assist. His most impressive game this season, against Nuggets; in 8 minutes, he shot 3-4 from the field, dunked, and played strong defense which helped hold that high powered offense to 37 second-half points.

Sam Vincent. "Sudden Sam", "The Accelerator" and "Tiny II". Has played better as he learns his teammates, his abilities, and the league. Averaged 15.6 minutes, averaged 7 ppg, and 2 assists per game. Missed the Denver game with slight swelling of left knee. Shot 1-9 FG with 6-points and 6-assists vs. Cleveland but Coach Jones liked his performance. Best efforts were back-to-back Fridays: January 3rd, he scored with an assist and a steal in win over Nets. On January 10th, he burned Hawks with push-up offense, 8-points, and an assist.

Bill Walton. Walton is struggling to regain his total game in limited minutes. Like all great ones, if his performance lags, he gets down. But finally the referees are letting him play his total-abandon game on defense. He blocked 4-shots last week, despite missing a game-and-a-half with a broken crown inside his mouth.

Scott Wedman. Wedman showing his all-around game and it's lifted Boston. Averaged 13.5 minutes, shot 18-for37 (.486). Scored 8 with a rebound and assist in 13 minutes vs. Nets; 14 points on 7-for-10 shooting in easy win over Cavs, January 8th. Six points, 5-rebounds, 3-assists in strong Green Team effort against Denver, January 15th.

BOSTON CELTICS STATISTICS

WON 30, LOST 8

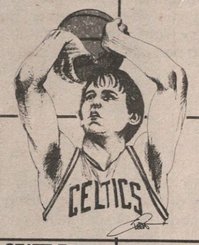
PLAYER	G	GS	MIN	-FIELD GOALS- FG	FGA	PCT	3-PT FG	FGA	-FREE THROWS- FT	FTA	PCT	--REBOUNDS-- OFF	DEF	TOT	AST	PF	DQ	STL	TO	BLK	PTS	AVG	HI
BIRD	38	38	1466	359	761	472	27	73	188	204	922	79	248	347	244	90	0	83	136	24	933	24 6	47
MCHALE	38	38	1469	331	596	555	0	0	202	257	786	102	239	341	118	111	2	18	82	75	864	22 7	34
PARISH	38	38	1237	240	434	553	0	0	117	162	722	120	230	350	71	99	1	39	89	60	597	15 7	27
JOHNSON	35	35	1236	214	463	462	2	13	119	145	821	33	89	122	187	98	2	59	70	7	549	15 7	30
AINGE	36	35	1120	179	333	538	12	27	59	65	908	21	89	110	204	98	1	53	66	4	429	11 9	26
WALTON	37	0	662	94	180	522	0	0	47	68	691	60	156	216	64	95	0	16	75	40	235	6 4	19
WEDMAN	38	0	494	108	236	458	6	20	18	35	514	16	50	66	29	51	0	18	25	13	240	6 3	21
SICHTING	38	6	743	96	177	542	0	5	28	29	966	14	34	48	89	67	0	31	36	0	220	5 8	17
VINCENT	26	0	249	27	82	329	1	3	29	32	906	3	23	26	49	36	0	9	29	3	84	3 2	9
THIRDKILL	14	0	77	13	23	565	0	0	14	32	438	7	7	14	4	10	0	0	8	0	40	2 9	11
CARLISLE	35	0	319	41	85	482	0	3	10	15	667	6	20	26	49	34	0	9	21	1	92	2 6	7
KITE	27	0	123	12	22	545	0	0	5	8	625	6	24	30	6	29	1	1	11	5	29	1 1	8
CELTICS	38		9245	1719	3413	504	48	158	843	1064	792	474	1237	1711	1116	833	7	337	663	233	4329	113 9	137
OPPONENTS	38		9245	1644	3470	474	33	119	728	978	744	495	1122	1617	919	933	8	334	652	165	4049	106 6	124

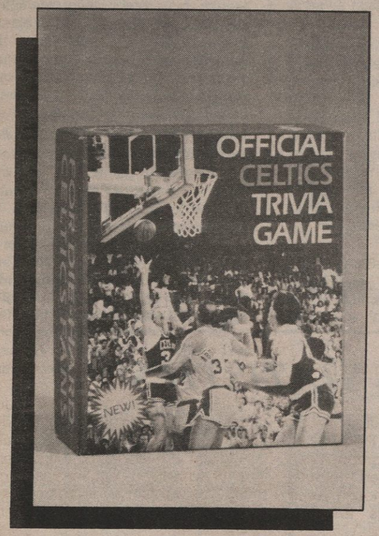
FEBRUARY

HOME AND AWAY SCHEDULE...
Home Games

BOSTON CELTICS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 SEATTLE SUPERSONICS 1:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	3	4 MILWAUKEE BUCKS 8:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	5 WASHINGTON BULLETS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	6		
9		11 SACRAMENTO KINGS 10:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	12	13 SEATTLE SUPERSONICS 10:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	14 portland trailblazers 10:00 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	
16 LOS ANGELES LAKERS 3:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	17 PHOENIX SUNS 9:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	18	19 Golden State WARRIORS 10:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	20 Denver Nuggets 9:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	21	
23 INDIANA PACERS 8:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	24	25 NEW YORK KNICKERBOCKERS 7:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	26 SAN ANTONIO SPURS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	27	28 LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	





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5. Who said "I could take 4 guys off the street in Petersburg [Virginia] and beat them (the Celtics)"?
6. Who said, "I'm going to look awfully silly ... if he stuffs the ball and me through the hoop!"

1. Les Smith
2. Light a cigar
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The "Year of the Big Man"

Last Year's Draft...A Look Back

By Rick Weitzman

Most everybody in the know agreed that last year's college draft was amongst the strongest in recent memory, both in quality and depth. After approximately three months of the NBA season has passed, a first evaluation can be made. Actually, a year or two must pass before a real thorough perspective can be made.

The draft of 1985 was to be the "Year of the Big Man." There were thirteen centers or big forwards chosen on the first round of twenty four picks. Keep in mind, though, that it sometimes takes a big man longer to develop, and thus, longer to make an impact in the NBA. Of course, Patrick Ewing is an exception. He is certainly living up to expectations. Due to the number of injuries the Knicks have suffered, Ewing has been asked to score more points, which he has done, averaging 20.4 points, but that has hurt his production in other areas. If you don't believe he's been an impact player, where would the Knicks be without him?

This year could be termed the "Year of the Forward."

Of the other big people selected in the first round, Wayman Tisdale, Jon Koncak, Joe Kleine, Karl Malone, and Detlef Schrempf have made immediate contributions. Tisdale, after a slow start, has now replaced the injured Clark Kellog in Indiana's lineup. Malone starts for Utah, Kleine for Sacramento, Koncak alternates with Tree Rollins in Atlanta, and Schrempf, who, at 6'9 plays big or small forward and guard, should be starting for Dallas. A.C. Green and Terry Catledge have played well at times for the Lakers and 76ers respectively.

Of the rest, Benoit Benjamin, taken by the Clippers with the third pick in the draft, has really struggled. Remember though, that he is young having come out early, and the Clippers needed him to make a major contribution right away, something he was definitely not ready for. Given time and patience, he could develop. Right now, the Clippers think he's the second coming of LaRue Martin. Keith Lee, selected by Chicago and traded to Cleveland for Charles Oakley, has been injured most of the year. Ed Pinckney is finding life in the Land of the Sun a bit more difficult than at the Palestra. Oakley, Blair Rasmussen. Bill Wennington, and Uwe Blab are all collecting splinters in Chicago, Denver and Dallas.

In 1984, eleven big guys were taken on the first round, and Akeem Olajuwon, Sam Bowie, Sam Perkins, Charles Barkley, Otis Thorpe, Kevin Willis have returned handsomely the investments their clubs made, while the jury is still out on Mel Turpin, Tim McCormick, Michael Cage, Jeff Turner, and Kenny Fields.

Of the small forwards and guards taken in 1985, certainly Seattle's X-man, Xavier McDaniel has been impressive, averaging 18 pts. Chris Mullen has made a difference for the Warriors after a prolonged holdout. The play of Terry Porter is the reason Darnell Valentine has been traded by Portland. Washington's Kenny Green since traded to Philadelphia, Alfrederick Hughes of San Antonio, Houston's Steve Harris, and Milwaukee's Jerry Reynolds have struggled to get playing time. Detroit's Joe Dumars and our own Sam Vincent have shown flashes of their potential but are playing behind some pretty good people so they have to bide their time.

Michael Jordan (until injured), Alvin Robertson, John Stockton, Vern Fleming, Terence Stansbury, and Jay Humphries are all bonafide players as graduates of the class of '84, while Lancaster Gordon, Leon Wood, and the ill-fated Michael Young have flopped, although Wood has emerged after his trade to Washington.

There have been, as always, some surprises. Who really expected Manute Bol to come as quickly as he has for Washington? Of course, the type of game the Bullets play has been well suited to Manute's talents. Spud Webb, all 5'7 of him in the NBA? The 4th round pick of the Pistons is creating all kinds of excitement in Atlanta. Georgi Glouchov, the 148th player taken in the draft on the 7th round is contributing in Phoenix, and has been likened to Dave DeBusschere. Gerald Wilkins, New York's 2nd round pick, has been a very pleasant surprise as a starter in the frontcourt, although his future is as an off-guard. I think somewhere down the line, Greg Stokes, John Battle, Tyrone Corbin, Ken Johnson, Bill Martin, and Dwayne McClain will prove their worth. However, what's happened to Calvin Duncan, Aubrey Sherrod, Yvon Joseph, George Montgomery, Mark Acres, Bobby Lee Hurt, John Williams, Adrian Branch, or Kenny Patterson? Will they ever surface to NBA level?

In all, 41 graduates of the draft of '85 adorn NBA rosters. There were 162 players drafted. Thirty two players have survived the 1984 draft, 29 players from the class of '83 are on NBA rosters, 27 from '82, 29 from '81, and 21 from Kevin McHale's class of 1980.

The upcoming draft features no dominant centers which is unusual given that Ewing, Olajuwon, Ralph Sampson, James Worthy, Mark Aguirre, and Joe Barry Carroll were the top selections in the last six drafts. This year could be termed the "Year of the Forward" with John Salley, Roy Tarpley, Kenny Walker, Chuck Person, Len Bias, and Rafael Addison probable first round selections. Only Brad Daugherty, as a center, has a chance, at this point, of being the first player selected. Overall, it doesn't look as strong a year as we've seen in the past, but that does not diminish the excitement connected with "Draft Day".

David Stern congratulates Wayman Tisdale on his selection by Indiana.

Rick Weitzman: Our man on the road.

Celtics Classics

The 1965- 66 Celtics

Red Auerbach's Last Year As Coach

Red Auerbach had been the most successful coach in the history of the NBA. And his record was perhaps unparalled by anyone to ever run a team in any sport. But by the 1965-66 season, Auerbach said enough was enough.

It was then that the 48-year-old Auerbach announced he would coach the Celtics for one more season, in order to concentrate solely on being general manager. Bill Russell would later be named to succeed Auerbach.

Although Auerbach wasn't one of the most popular of people in other NBA cities, his contributions to the sport were unquestioned. Each time the Celtics made their last appearance to a road city, the respective team paid tribute to Auerbach. In Cincinnati, 5,000 free cigars were handed out to fans attending the game. The idea was to allow each patron to light the stoogie after the Royals had beaten the Celtics.

That didn't happen, though. The Celtics won that game.

Boston, not wanting Auerbach to leave his coaching career with a bad cigar in his mouth, figured the best salute to their leader would be to supply him with one more championship. They did, but it was a fight all the way.

The Celtics finished second in the Eastern Division- with a 54-26 record, a game behind the first-place Philadelphia 76ers, This marked the first time in 10 years Boston failed to win the division. However, since the Sixers boasted such hoop luminaries as Wilt Chamberlain, Bull Cunningham, Chet Walker and Hal Greer, coming in second to them was certainly no disgrace.

The Celtics faced Cincinnati (with Ocsar Robertson and Jerry Lucas) and received the scare of their lives. The Royals won two of the first three contests in the best-of-five series, needing only one more to send the Celtics, Auerbach and the cigars home for the spring and summer. Luckily for Boston, it got back on the beam and captured the next two games.

After that, the 76ers beckoned. Division champs or no, the Celts steamrolled in five games, including blowouts of 19 and 21 points.

Meanwhile, in the Western Division, the Los Angeles Lakers had won their first two series and were ready for another title appearance. This would be the fourth time in five years the Lakers and Celtics were to meet to decide who'd take the NBA spoils.

1965-66 Celtics: Won it for Red.

The Lakers won the opener, in Boston, by a 133-129 count in overtime. Boston bounced back to hand the Lakers a 129-109 loss in the second game...

The series shifted out to the Los Angeles Sports Arena, where the Celtics won the next two, 120-106 and 122-117. Leading three games to one, it appeared the Celtics had the series in the game.

Not so fast, Los Angeles won another game at the Garden, 121-117, then knotted the series with a 123-115 decision in game six.

So the stage for the proverbial seventh and deciding game was set. At the Garden, the Celtics jumped off to a 10-0 start and were up by 15 points, 53-38 at the half. Early in the third quarter, the edge swelled to 19 points. At the end of, 36 minutes, the Celtics were leading 76-60. With four minutes left, the Lakers were down by 13.

Russell wrapped up a 25-point, 32-rebound outing with a dunk with 10 seconds left, and the Celtics had a 10-point lead. Two Jerry West baskets later, the Celts were up by six with 16 seconds left.

The game was well in hand, but there was a problem. The Garden crowd went nuts when Auerbach lit his final victory cigar, and thousands of fans swarmed the court. John Havlicek was unable to in-bound the ball to polish off the final seconds, so play had to be halted.

Implored to cease and desist by Sam Jones, Havlicek and other players, the fans cleared the floor and order was restored. Almost.

Now it was the Celtics' turn to go berserk. They committed four turn overs in the enusing 10 seconds, and saw their seemingly-impregnable lead dwindle to four, 95-91. And when Leroy Ellis sank a jumper with four seconds left.

The crowd, once mobbing the parquet floor in a frenzy, was eerily silent. However, K.C. Jones was able to kill the remaining seconds on the clock, and Auerbach had his final championship.

After it was all over, Auerbach said he'd decided to retire because the grind of carrying the dual load of coaching/general manager was finally getting to him, physically and mentally, Auerbach wanted to make sure he'd leave the coaching fraternity on a winning note.

"Everyone had figured that I'd pick my spot, that I'd quit after a season when we'd won, making sure I went out a winner," Auerbach said.

"But there was absolutely no guarantee I'd go out a winner. Cousy, Sharman, Heinson, Ramsey and Loscutoff were gone, and we were getting old fast. Everyone had their chance and their last shot at me. When it was over, there was a lump in my throat as I walked out the locker-room. It was the longest year of my life. I didn't want to be called a quitter. That was very important to me."

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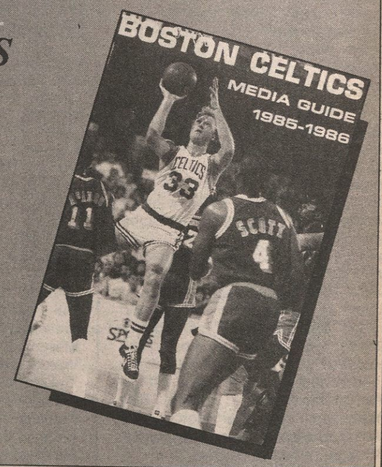

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Past and Present

Celtics Greats

Tom "Satch" Sanders

Tom "Satch" Sanders was a thinking man's player during his 13-year tenure with the Celtics. He was the sort who took the cerebral approach in getting the most out of his abilities. Therefore, it's fitting that this stately New York native be involved in education.

Sanders is the associate director for the Center of Study in Sports and Society at Northeastern. The program is about 18 months old.

"It's geared to come up with approaches to the problems in sports," Sanders explains. "One key solution is education. With that in mind, we feel that all institutions involved are to make sure all young athletes spread their focus, so there's a better balance between sports and athletics."

"The odds of making a pro career are miniscule, at best. Because of that, kids ought to concentrate on balance between sports and education.

"Schools ought to make sure an athlete has the chance to finish their education."

The center consists of a consortium of 11 schools, including Georgetown, Seton Hall, Long Beach State and California-Berkeley.

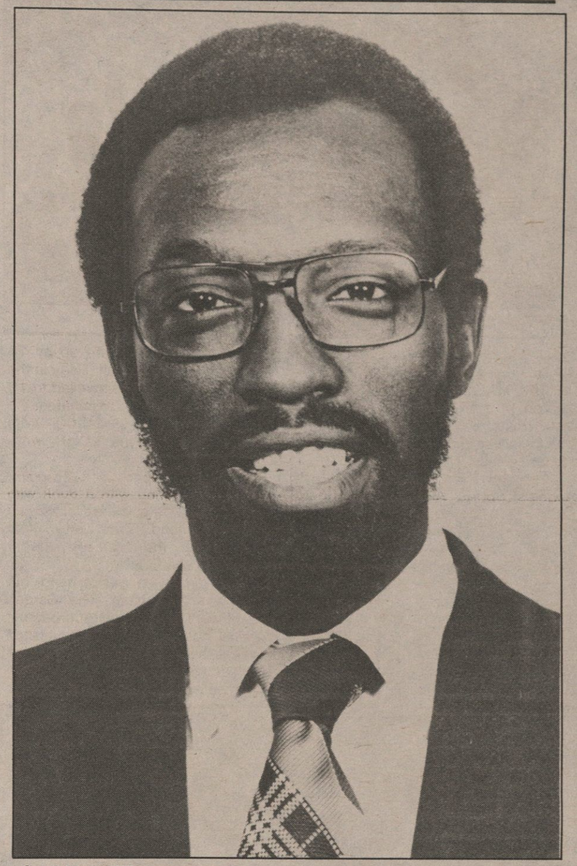
College sports are going through some tough times these days. At far too many schools, athletes are nothing more than on-campus jocks who happen to show up at a basket-weaving class once a week for an hour. It seems as if you can't pass a day without reading about a recruiting scandal somewhere in the country.

The center's major goal is to clean up big-time college sports-- to make sure the student/athletes are **really** student/athletes. To accomplish this, Sanders says the universities must cooperate.

"Schools ought to make sure an athlete has the chance to finish their education," Sanders says. "If they over-indulge in athletics during four years, schools should make sure they have a fifth or sixth year (to continue their education).

"If kids from the last 10 years didn't graduate, the school should bring them back at the school's cost."

One problem with college sports is athletes oftentimes put in their four years, and are sputted out by the school, never to be heard from again. Sanders would like to see the colleges and universities take a more active role in, making sure athletes receive degrees, be it in four years or more.



Satch has a different approach.

"Schools are asking a special service from athletes," Sanders says. "If they're going to play, it has to work both ways. If a student is giving his talent to a university, the university should give the student the opportunity to do more than just stay at the school and be eligible."

Probably the worst decision the NCAA has ever made was to allow freshmen to become eligible for varsity competition. Sanders would like to see the ruling reversed, but doubts if it'll ever happen, even though it would help many athletes.

"Before, you had a year to get familiar with the academic scene," Sanders says. Everyone knows the toughest year in college is your first year. You're getting used to your independence and being away from home."

When Sanders was a college student, he had no trouble blending athletics and books. He's a 1960 graduate of New York University, back in the days when NYU was a college basketball power.

"It wasn't the same time-wise. There wasn't a big emphasis on weight, diet and body this, body that. Now it's a year-long emphasis with training. That's why today's athletes are better."

Sanders was a pretty good athlete himself. A number-one pick and the eighth player taken in the 1960 NBA draft, Sanders was a member of eight Celtics championship teams. And he was as big a contributor as anyone else, although he did so in a quiet, unnoticeable manner.

"Satch hardly got any recognition as a player, "Tommy Heinsohn once said. "But he did more to help our team than anyone ever realized-- except the players. We knew."

On his long career with Boston, Sanders says, "Making the team was the outstanding point. After that, everything runs together. There was a lot of winning, a lot of championships and a lot of good guys."

After Sanders retired, he spent four years as Harvard's head basketball coach. From there, he joined the Celtics as an assistant in 1977-78. Thirty-four games into that season, Heinsohn was fired and Sanders was handed the reins.

"The talent is different and the size is different and the faces are different, but the problems are the same."

Unlike the Celtics teams on which Sanders had played, this one wasn't at all a power. On the contrary, it was in major disarray.

"We had problems being competitive," Sanders says. "It added to the pressures to produce. It was a difficult time for the franchise-- it was in transition."

What was coaching in the NBA like, as opposed to Harvard?

"On any level you're on, the problems are the same," Sanders says. "The talent's different and the size is different and the faces are different, but the problems are the same."

Sanders' biggest concern these days is trying to alleivate some of the woes plaguing major-college sports. He feels the best of both worlds is possible, where schools field top-flight teams and have players who walk away from the field or court with a sheepskin in hand.

"It can be done." Sanders says. "Everybody wants to be a bigtime athlete and have a high profile. But I want to make sure we take care of youngsters, so they get what they came to college for (an education). I've heard too many horror stories of kids who go through high school and college totally unprepared for what's outside."

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